



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

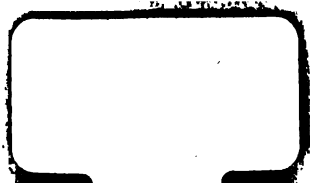
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

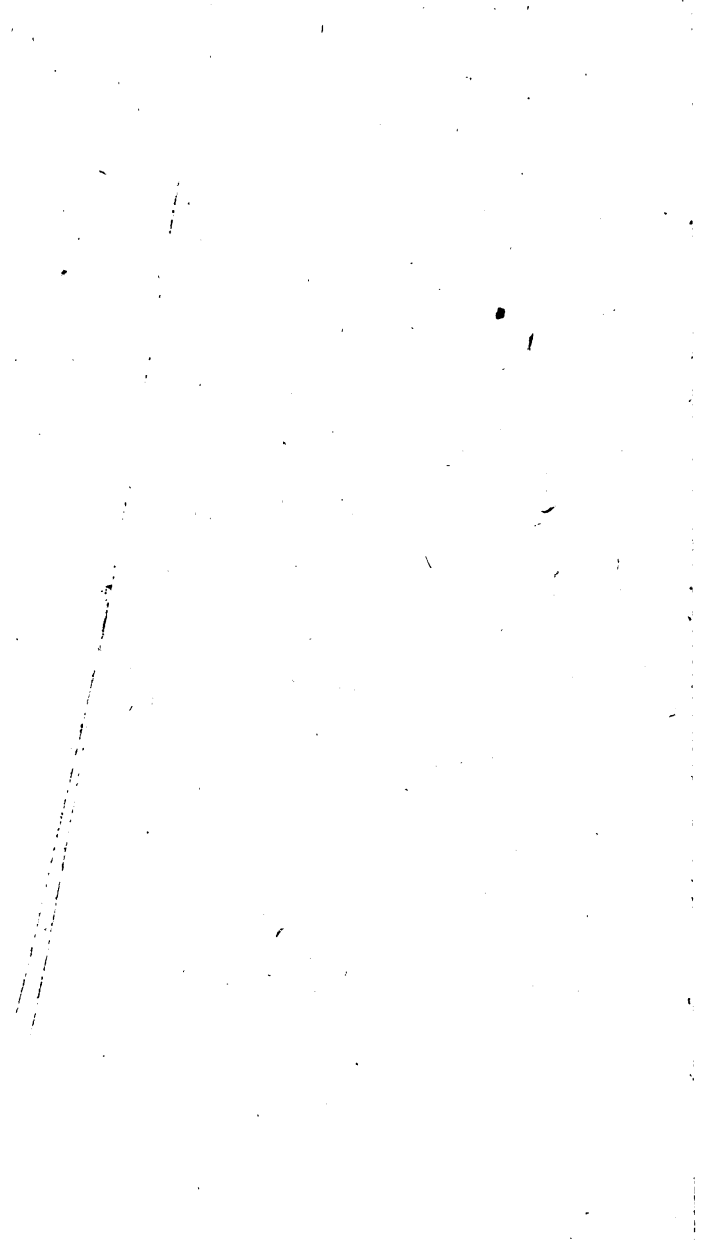
NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES

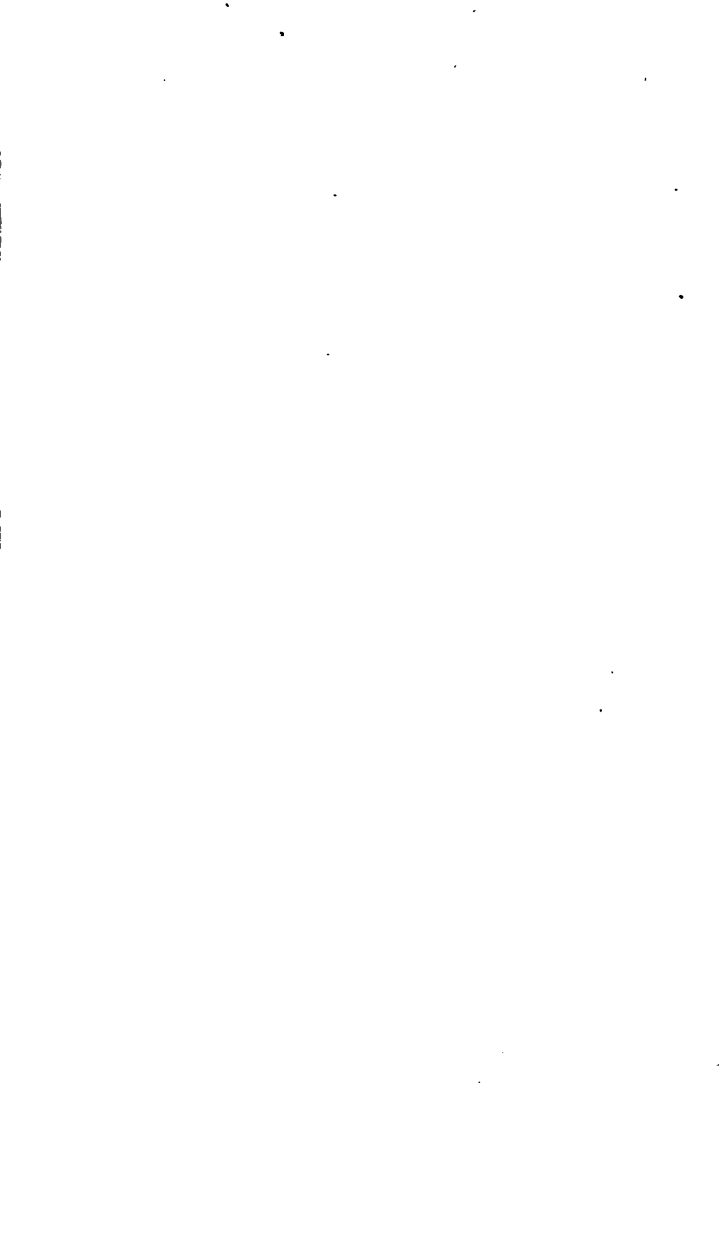


3 3433 07579898 7



May 12/18







L E T T E R S
WRIT BY
A TURKISH SPY,
WHO LIVED
FIVE AND FORTY YEARS
UNDISCOVERED AT
P A R I S:
GIVING

An Impartial ACCOUNT to the Divan at Constanti-
nople, of the most remarkable Transactions of
Europe: And discovering several Intrigues and
Secrets of the Christian Courts (especially of that
of France). Continued from the Year 1642, to
the Year 1682.

Written originally in ARABICK, translated into ITA-
LIAN, and from thence into ENGLISH, by the
Translator of the First Volume.

VOLUME V.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for A. WILDE, J. BROTHERTON and SEWELL,
C. BATHURST, E. BALLARD, W. STRAHAN, J. and
F. RIVINGTON, W. JOHNSTON, S. CROWDER, E. and
C. DILLY, R. BALDWIN, C. CORBETT, J. WILKIE,
S. BLADON, W. HARRIS, B. COLLINS, and W.
FLEXNEY. MDCCLXX.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

1379A

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

R 1921 L

TO THE

READER.

PREFACES, methinks, are so much like the printed bills pasted upon the booths in Bartholomew-Fair, to give an account of the entertainment you are to expect within ; that, were it not in pure compliance to custom, one would forswear writing any. But the world is humorous, and must be served according to its own fashion. Every thing is damned that is not a-la-mode. And he that publishes a book, without civilly acquainting the reader at the beginning, is thought to intrench upon good manners.

To prevent all these inconveniencies, it is thought fit once more to say a word or two, not in praise of this volume of Letters, (even let it take its fortune as the other four have done ;) but by way of apology for some things, which may seem liable to censure.

To the R E A D E R.

Some, perhaps, will be offended at the zeal which appears in this Arabian, when he writes in honour of the Mahometan Faith. Others will as much wonder at his looseness and indifference, his doubtfulness of all things : For, in some of his Letters, he appears a great Sceptic, and confesses himself so.

These Gentlemen ought to consider, that his style and sentiments are suited to the quality of the person to whom he writes. To his intimate friends he unbores himself with abundance of frankness ; but, when he addresses to the Mufti, or other Grandees of the Porte, he is cautious and reserved.

It may be supposed, that he understood himself very well, or else he was not fit for that employment in Paris. And, without doubt, having had his education in the Seraglio, as he professes, he was no stranger to the punctilio's of address used in the Turkish Court. It was his policy and interest to appear a very devout Mahometan, when he wrote to the Ministers of State : and it is possible he was so in reality, or at least persuaded himself so, at certain seasons. And yet this hinders not, but he might, at other times, take the liberty to descant on some
absurdities

To the R E A D E R,

absurdities in their doctrines and practice, when he wrote to his familiars, and was minded to converse with freedom.

If in some points he seemed to give credit to the Arabian writers, who have treated of Egypt and its antiquities; in others, he shews himself a man not over fond of fables and romances.

However, let his opinions be what they will, and his sentiments never so extravagant in matters of speculation and controversy, so long as his morals are sound and good, there is no occasion to be captious. We need not fear that any Christian, or any man of sense, will be proselyted by his Letters to a religion, which he himself, though professing it, yet so often doubts of and ridicules.

He speaks very honourably of Christ, and impartially of Christians, accusing their vices rather than their doctrines, and appearing all along a moderate man in his sentiments of religion, and a friend to virtue and reason. If he discovers some failings, in being too melancholy, consider, that he was a mortal like other men. However, reader, admire his untainted loyalty, and imitate it.

After

To the R E A D E R.

You will find in this volume true history, with variety of solid remarks ; and not a few secrets of Cardinal Mazarine and Oliver Cromwell uncabinetted : Particularly, that famous intrigue carried on by Colonel Spinetelet and his confederates, to save Ostend from being surpris'd by the French in the year 1658, and to bubble two of the ablest Statesmen in Europe.

After all, assure thyself, that the next volume will contain more illustrious relation than any that has gone before : Where you will hear of an end put to the war between France and Spain, after it had lasted five an twenty years ; and the marriage of Lew XIV. with the Spanish Infanta ; as also of a universal peace in Christendom : The restoration of Charles the Second to his crown and kingdoms, after twelve years exile in foreign countries, and twelve several revolutions of government, here at home. With many other memorable and important events and transactions in the world : As the dread earthquake which overturned part of the renean mountains ; the more destructive plague, which swept away almost an hundred thousand people in London ; and the dreadful fire, which consumed the greatest part of that famous city, in the space of three days.

To the R E A D E R.

You will there also find an account of the death of that great Minister of State, Cardinal Mazarine : Of the Duke of Orleans, uncle to the French King : Of the Duchefs of Savoy : Of Carolus Josephus, the Emperor's brother : Of the Duke of Vendosme : Of the Queen-Mother of France, and of Philip IV, King of Spain, with other persons of princely quality.

For this Arabian was careful to transmit to the Ottoman Porte intelligence of all things which were most remarkable in Europe. And, that his Letters might not seem tedious, he intermixed moral reflections, with some maxims of policy, essays of reason, and, now and then, a touch of philosophy: and if we may guess at the cause of his more abounding in these kinds of miscellany discourses after the year 1659, than he did before ; it seems probable, that, a general peace about that time being established in Europe, he had little else to write, but his observations on the several States and Courts of Christian Princes ; the different manners, customs, and laws of people ; the counsels and intrigues of Statesmen : With such other matters as occurred worthy of notice.

If either in this volume, or in those that are to come, he seems in any of his Letters to alter
his

To the R E A D E R.

his opinion, and contradict his former sentiments; remember it is no more than what the greatest writers have done, who have lived to old-age, as this agent did. No-body is ignorant of St. Augustine's Retractions, and Cornelius Agrippa's Vanity of Sciences: Wherein those two great authors run counter to all they had writ before. And it were easy to produce an hundred instances besides.

In a word, reader, take in good part the translator's pains, who renders things as he found them, without altering or corrupting the sense of his copy. Farewell.

A T A.

A T A B L E

OF THE
LETTERS and MATTERS
contained in this Volume.

VOL. V.

BOOK. I.

LETTER. I.

M Ahmut the Arabian, and vilest of the Grand Signior's slaves, to the mysterious Esad, Arbitrator of doubtful Problems, Prince of the Mufti's, Page 1

He complains for want of fuller instructions in several cases, and particularly desires his counsel as to the fast of Ramezan.

H. To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna, 4
Remarks on the death of the Roman King: With some curious Epitaphs.

III. To Mahummed Hodgia, Venerable Eremité of the Cave replete with Wonders, 8
Of Mahmud's infirmities: A remarkable story of Clearchus, a devout man in Asia.

IV. To the Kaimacham, 14
Of the sieges of Stenay and Arras. A notable instance of gallantry in the garrison of Merdin.

V. To Dgnet Oglou, 17
Mahmut acquaints him how he spends his birth-day, with reflections on the usual vanity of mortals at such times.

VOL. V.

2

VI

The TABLE.

- VI.** To the Seliſtar Aga, or Sword-Bearer to the
Grand Signior, 19
*Of the ſurrender of Stenay, and the relief of Arras.
Remarks on the ſigns which went before the King of
the Romans death. Of Queen Chriſtina's coming
to Antwerp.*
- VII.** To Peſteli Hali, his brother, Maſter of the
Grand Signior's Cuſtoms at Conſtantinople, 22
*He adviſes him to be frugal of time, and not to ſpend
it in gaming. The miſfortune of a Chineſe Cap-
tain.*
- VIII.** To the Reis Effendi, Principal Secretary of
the Ottoman Empire, 27
*He expoſtulates with him about Kainan Baſſa's old
grudge, &c.*
- IX.** To the Venerable Muſti, 29
*Of the Pope's ſickneſs and laſt will. A character of
his ſiſter-in-law, Donna Olympia. Of the war
between the Muſcovites and Polanders. Of the
Grand Signior's loſſes by ſea.*
- X.** To Peſteli Hali, his brother, Maſter of the
Grand Signior's Cuſtoms, 32
*He informs him of the arrival of his mother Oucomiche,
and his couſin Iſouf, at Paris.*
- XI.** To Adonai, a Jew, priſoner in the Tower of
Nona at Rome, 36
*He reprehends his immoralities for meddling with the
religion of the Romans. Teaches him a receipt to
procure his eſcape.*
- XII.** To Mehemet, once an Eunuch Page in the
Seraglio, but now an Exile in Egypt, at
Grand Cairo, 40
*Of the lawfulness of wine. A diſpute between Noah
and the Devil about it. Of Joſeph's priſon; the
land of Alphion; the ſtory of Hagar; the mother of
Iſmael, and other matters.*

The T A B L E.

- XIII. To Kerker Hassan, Bassa, 45
Of the Pope's death; and of the ambition of the Roman clergy.
- XIV. To the Kaimacham, 47
He blames Kifur Dramelec, Secretary of the Nazarene affairs, for not sending him timely and good intelligence. Of a violent plague in Muscovy. Of Egyptians or Gypsies.
- XV. To the same, 50
Divers opinions concerning the origin of the Gypsies. Of the Conclave at Rome, and of Cardinal de Retz.

B O O K. II.

L E T T E R I.

- T**O Cara Hali, Physician to the Grand Signor, 55
A story of Helal, a Physician of Arabia. Of Avicen, and of Thabet Eb'n Abraham.
- II. To Afis, Bassa, 60
Of the strange punishment inflicted on a deer-stealer of Wirtemberg by the Elector of Saxony. A story of an Arabian Captain.
- III. To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna, 63
More on the same subject. Remarks on the Indians, and on the law of Moses.
- IV. To Dgebe Nafir, Bassa, 66
Of the sects and divisions among the Christians, particularly of the wars between the Catholics and Protestants in Piedmont.
- V. To William Vospel, a Recluse of Austria, 69
Of the sepulchre of King Childeric. Mahmut presents him with a cabinet of curious antiquities.
- VI. To the most Illustrious and Invincible Vizir Azem, at the Porte, 72
Of a secret order given him by the Vizir; and the necessary

The T A B L E.

cessity of a Turkish Ambassador in the French Court to carry on the design.

- VII. To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna, 75
He advises him not to be too religious, but to follow his business chearfully.
- VIII. To Mustapha Lulu Beamtulla, a Man of the Law, 77
He argues against the false notions of the Resurrection common among Mahometans and Christians. Of the apparition of bones in Egypt.
- IX. To Solyman Kussir Aga, Prince of the Black Eunuchs, 80
Of the advance of the Bassa of Aleppo to the Prime Vizirate.
- X. To the most illustrious Vizir Azem, at the Porte, 82
He congratulates his new dignity, and claims a reward for having formerly accused him to the Divan, when he held a correspondence with the Venetians.
- XI. To Mehemet, an exiled Eunuch, at Cairo in Egypt, 85
He ridicules some stories of the Egyptians, and relates, in short, the voyage of Domingo Gonzales to the Moon.
- XII. To Zornesan Mustapha, Bassa of the sea, 88
He wishes him good success against the Venetians; a short character of that people. Of the conquest of Jamaica by the English. A discourse of Oliver, the English Protector. Of Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus's being elected King of the Romans.
- XIII. To Pesteli Hali, his brother, Master of the Grand Signior's Customs, 91
An encomium of his cousin Isouf. Of his being in Muscovy. He desires him to recommend Isouf to Kerker Hassan Bassa. Isouf's remarks on Egypt.
- XIV. To Ismael Kaidar Cheik, a Man of the Law, 94

The T A B L E.

- Of Queen Christina's rambles through Europe, with an Italian libel which was found in the hands of Pasquin.*
- XV. To the same, 97
Of a new star appearing in Europe. The Jews opinion of it, and of their Messias. Of the rebellion of the late Vizir Azem's son. Of a peace between the French and English.
- XVI. To Solyman, his cousin, at Scutari, 100
He reprehends his discontentedness, and encourages him to follow his trade, by several eminent examples. A story of Diogenes and Plato.
- XVII. To Mëlec Amet, 104
Of a Moor baptised in Paris. Of the Ottoman friar in Malta. And of Don Philipppo, son of the Dey of Tunis. Of Cardinal Mazarine's trick to hinder Sweden and Brandenburg from making a league against King Casimir.
- XVIII. To Sedree Al' Girwā'n, Chief Treasurer to the Grand Signior, 108
He congratulates his new honour. Of Kainan Bassa's being found by the Tartars on a dunghil in Muscovy, when a child. He descants on the late sedition at Constantinople.
- XIX. To the same, 113
How Mahmut's chamber was searched, and the method he took to secure his box of letters.

B O O K III.

L E T T E R I.

- T**O Dgnet Oglou, N9
He discourses concerning Chance and the origin of Evil. Of Deists in Europe. And of the Sincere Fraternity among the ancient Arabians.
- II. To the Nazin Eschref, or Prince of the Emirs, at the Porte, 124
Of

The T A B L E.

- Of a terrible plague broke out in Rome, Naples, and the adjacent parts. Of the loss of Valenciennes to the Spaniards. Of Adonai's death at Rome.*
- III. To Melec Amet, 126
Of a great chasm, or breach, made in the earth not far from Paris.
- IV. To Zornezan Mustapha, Beglérbeg of Erzeram, 127
He congratulates his retreat from the toils and perils of the Seraglio. Reflections on the authors of the late troubles at Constantinople.
- V. To the most Renowned and most Illustrious Mahomet, Vizir Azem, at the Porte, 130
Mahmut congratulates his assumption to this dignity. Presents him with the pictures of the French King, Cardinal Mazarine, Queen of Sweden, and others: As also with twelve watches of his own workmanship. Of Queen Christina's entertainment at the French Court.
- VI. To Abraham Eli, Zeid Hogia, Preacher to the Seraglio, 134
He descants on the covenant of Mahomet with the Christians. Some prophetic passages of Mahomet. A story of a black image in Spain.
- VII. To Murat, Bassa, 138
Of the death of the King of Portugal, and the coronation of his son. Of Count Harcourt's playing fast and loose with the French King: And of the Marshal de la Ferte's bravery.
- VIII. To Hebatolla Mir Argun, Superior of the Convent of Dervises at Cogni in Natolia, 140
He condoles the death of Bedredin, his predecessor; sends him the true effigies of the Messiah, with a short history of John the Baptist.
- IX. To Selim Al' Mosel, Venerable Imaum of the Mosque of Sancta Sophia, 145
Of Columbus, the first discoverer of America: And of the

The TABLE.

the destruction of Lima and Calao, two cities in Peru, by an earthquake and fire from heaven.

X. To Mustapha, Bassa, 148

Of Ismael Bir Couli Can, the Persian Ambassador at the Porte.

XI. To Mehemet, an exiled Eunuch in Egypt, 151

He acquaints him with the death of Solyman, the Kuffir Aga. Of the antiquity of the pyramids. King Saudrid's vision. Another of Aschmon the High-Priest. He asserts the eternity of the world.

XII. To the most Venerable Musti, 158

He congratulates his assumption to that sacred dignity: Proposes the advantage of translating histories into the Turkish language: And discourses of the ancient Arabians and Scythians.

XIII. To the Kaimacham, 162

Of the German Emperor's death: The ill state of the Empire. The factions of the Electors, and Cardinal Mazarine's aims.

XIV. To Raba Mahomet, General of the Ottoman forces, at his camp near Adrianople, 164

Of the affairs of Babylon and the Persians. Of the troubles in Europe. Of a terrible eruption of fire from Mount Ætna in Sicily.

XV. To Cara Hali, Physician to the Grand Signior, 168

He descants on the succession of Abu Beere, Omar, and Othman, the first Caliphs: And seems to favour Hali, the Prophet of the Persians.

XVI. To Cara Mustapha, Bassa, 171

Of the isle of Tenedos; and the Trojan war. Of Ajax's folly in killing himself. Of seventeen Spanish ships of war burnt and sunk by the English, under the command of Admiral Blake: With other matters.

XVII. To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna, 174

Of the quarrel between the Elector of Bavaria and Prince Palatine, about the Vicarship of the Empire.

XVIII.

The T A B L E.

- XVIII.** To Melec Amet, 177
Of Trances and Ecstacies. A story of Selah, an Indian Physician.
- XIX.** To the Kaimacham, 180
Of the surrender of Montmeli to the French, and the Speech of the Governor to the King. Of the Turks ill successes in Candia.
- XX.** To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna, 185
He relates, in short, the life and miracles of Mahomet.
- XXI.** To Dichieu Hussein, Bassa, 189
Of a quarrel between the French and Spanish Ambassadors at the Hague: With other intelligence from Denmark, Portugal, Munster, and the German Court.
- XXII.** To Dgnet Oglou, 191
He complains of his friends reservedness and silence. Rebukes the trivial controversies of the Mussulmans. And denies that God has a body or passions like us.
- XXIII.** To the Aga of the Janizaries, 195
Of the Swedes taking Frederickstadt by storm. An interview of the King of Poland and Elector of Brandenburg. Of the taking of Mardyke by the French and English.

B O O K IV.

L E T T E R I

- T**O Cara Hali, Physician to the Grand Signior, 199
He discourses of Free-Will and Predestination. A digression occasioned by a sudden tempest of thunder and lightning.
- II.** To Mustapha, Bassa, 203
Of Queen Christina's sentencing one of her domesticks to death: And the censure of the Civilians thereupon.
- III.** To Mustapha, Berber Aga, 205
He

The T A B L E.

- He acquaints him with the birth of a young Prince of Spain, and the extraordinary magnificences exhibited by the Spanish Ambassadors at the Hague, on this occasion.*
- IV. To Pesteli Hali, his brother, Master of the Grand Signior's Customs at Constantinople, 207
Of his mother Oucomiche; and of Ifous, his cousin. Of the pyramids and mummies; with some remarks on the Nile.
- V. To the Kaimacham, 213
Of the sentence pronounced by the Venetians against Girolamo Loredano and Giovanni Contarini. Examples of justice on traitors. Of great inundations in Germany and Flanders.
- VI. To Solyman, his cousin, at Constantinople, 216
He expostulates with him about his being too religious. Several opinions of philosophers concerning the soul.
- VII. To Afis, Bassa, 219
Of an interview between the Kings of Denmark and Sweden: And the peace that ensued.
- VIII. To the Musti, 221
He acquaints him with the project of a certain Jesuit, to reform the state of Christendom.
- IX. To Abdel Melec Muli Omar, 226
He relates, in short, his education, and the method of his studies in Sicily. A word or two of Porphyry.
- X. To Murat, Bassa, 229
Of the taking Dunkirk by the French, and the putting it into the hands of the English. Of the French King's illness and recovery.
- XI. To Mahamed, the Eremita of Mount Uriel in Arabia, 231
He discourses of his own passions and vices: With something of his virtues.
- XII. To Achmet Padishani Culligiz, Bassa, 236
He congratulates his succession to Darnish Mehemet, Bassa. Of the election of a new German Emperor.
The

The TABLE.

- The death of Oliver; and the French design on Ostend.*
- XIII. To Pesteli Hali, his brother, Master of the Grand Signior's Customs at Constantinople, 242
Of the Arctick regions, and the nature of cold. Of the works which the Northern people build upon the ice. Of the funeral monuments of ancient Heroes.
- XIV. To Zeidi Alamanzi, a merchant at Venice, 245
He recommends to him fidelity, and gives him a short account of his life.
- XV. To the Kaimacham, 247
Of the jealousy of the Venetians towards strangers. A general character of the Italians. A comparison of them with the French.
- XVI. To William Vospel, a Recluse of Austria, 250
Of a street in Paris, called the Street of Hell. Remarks on the nature of incorporeal beings.
- XVII. To the Venerable Ibrahim, Cadilesquier of Romelja, 252
Of the interview between Cardinal Maxarine and Don Louis de Haro, the Spanish Minister, in order to a peace.
- XVIII. To Musu Abu'i Yahyan Alfaqui, Professor of Theology at Fez, 254
Of the Zune or Book of Doctrine. Of the piety of Omar Eb'n Abdul Aziz, the ninth Caliph.

LETTERS

L E T T E R S

WRIT BY

A SPY AT PARIS.

B O O K I.

L E T T E R I.

Mahmut the Arabian, and vilest of the Grand Signior's Slaves, to the mysterious Esad, Arbitrator of doubtful Problems, Prince of the Mufti's.

WHEN I first came to Paris, my instructions were not so full and particular, as to direct in all emergencies. A great many things were left to my own conduct and prudence, both in civil and religious matters. So that, if I have made any false steps, I hope it will be excusable ; in regard it is not so much my fault as that of the Ministers who reside at the august Porte. I have often addressed to them, desiring supplemental rules and cautions in some peculiar cases which I proposed : But they have been very sparing of their counsels. It is true, indeed, about five years ago, I received some particular orders from the Vizir Azem, and the Kaimacham, as also from thy Sanctity : Wherein I was commanded to write with all freedom

VOL. V. B dom

dom to the Grandees. This, with the other directions, has been of great use to me. It has armed me with fresh courage, and removed the melancholy apprehensions I had of some men's revenge, whose vices I reprov'd. Praise be to GOD, King of the Day of Judgment, I have accused no man wrongfully. Yet I was full of fears, even in the performance of my duty; knowing, that mortals generally love to have their faults concealed, and pursue those with malice who discover, or apprehend them. But now all my fears in that kind are vanished. Yet I have scruples of another nature, which none but the infallible Guide of the Faithful can disperse.

Ever since I have resided here, I have been precise in observing all the precepts of our holy law, so far as consist'd with the security and success of my commission. For I have been forced to leap over many lyes and false oaths to conceal myself. I have likewise done abundance of other irregular things, to promote the cause I am engaged in, for all which thou hast vouchsafed me a dispensation. There remains one thing in which thy advice is necessary:

I have been hitherto punctual in keeping the fast of Ramazan, at the time appointed to all Mussulmans; which, thou knowest, falls earlier by eleven days every year than it did the year before. So that, in the space of four-and-thirty years, it passes through all the four seasons. Now this successive variation of the great fast, causing it sometimes to fall at the very times of the most solemn festivals among the Nazarenes, such as that which they call their Christmas, which is a feast of thirteen days: I fear, lest I may be taken notice of, should I, by celebrating the Ramazan at those times, contradict the universal practice of all the Franks, and start suspicions in those with whom I converse, to my disadvantage and ruin.

To thee, therefore, who art the wisest of the wise, I fly for counsel in this exigency, beseeching thee to dictate plainly what I am to do.

I know

I know that the sick, or wounded, or travellers, are dispensed with, if they violate the Sacred Moon. At which time the gates of Paradise are opened, and invisable favours are done to the devout observers of this precept : Whilst the avenues of Hell are barricadoed, and all the devils chained up from appearing abroad, or doing any mischief in the world. I say, I am not ignorant of the indulgence which is given to men under such circumstances, provided they satisfy the law, by keeping the fast at some other season, more agreeable to their health, or other necessities. And thus far I could have silenced the alarms of my own conscience, without molesting thee : Knowing, that a Mussulman is always allowed this liberty in a foreign country, much more in a region of Infidels.

But that which I aim at is to be informed, Whether, to put the better disguise on myself, and more efficaciously to prosecute the interest of the Grand Signior, I may not always celebrate this fast at the precise time that the Christians keep their Lent ? For then I should pass unsuspected, and no man would take me for any another than a Christian and a Catholick. Nay, my manner of daily fasting, at that time, would raise a considerable credit among the Christians that know me, they would cry me up for a saint, or a very holy man. For the fast of the Christians is a feast in comparison of the rigorous abstinence of the Mussulmans. Those indeed refrain all sorts of flesh, but they load their tables with variety of fish, and other dainties ; neither have they patience to tarry for their repast beyond the mid-day. Whereas the Mussulmans taste of nothing during the Ramazan, till the sun is gone down, and the stars appear. No, not even in the parching desarts of Arabia, where men are ready to perish of thirst ; yet no man will extend his hand to the water-pot to refresh himself in those unspeakable agonies, till the shadow of the earth is advanced into the higher region of the air, and has banished the least glimmerings of the sun. When,

4 LETTERS, WRITTEN BY

therefore, the Franks shall see me fast after this austere fashion in their Lent, they will say, I am a very mortified man, and a devout Catholick: For they judge altogether by the outside. So, if any danger should threaten me, I should find friends among the zealots, and the indifferent would not appear my enemies: But the wicked, whose black guilt has rendered them a terror to themselves, as well as an abomination to others, would stand in fear of me. Thus, on all hands, a way would be open for me to escape a discovery of the secrets committed to my charge.

It would be much more to my satisfaction, if I could with safety celebrate this fast in the very moon wherein the Alcoran was brought down from heaven, as all good Mussulmans generally do: But I am taught not to betray, or so much as hazard the affairs of my great Master for a mere nicety or punctilio of religion. God is the merciful of the merciful, and it is his will that the empire of the true Faithful should be extended wherever the moon or the sun shine on earth.

Great Oracle of the Mussulmans, Doctor of faith and verity, it is in thy power to confirm or shake my resolution in this point: For, from thy sentence, there is no appeal.

Paris, 5th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER II.

To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna.

THOU informest me, that the King of the Romans is dead, and that divers prodigies happened about the time of his expiring. Whilst others report, that the German Emperor himself died the 9th of the last moon. However, I shall transmit thy

thy advice to the shining Porte; not trusting to the uncertain intelligence of fame.

Kings and Emperors must resign up their breath as well as other mortals. It is a tribute we all owe to Nature, who will be paid one time or other. Neither has she ever exempted any from the common lot, save Enoch, Elias, and Jesus the son of Mary. These were holy Prophets, perfect Saints; and void of original sin, and therefore received an indulgence. Though those of your nation and the Christians believe, that the last of these three died on a cross.

As for all others; they have either been dissolved by sickness, or snatched away by sudden death: Some by an invisible dart from Heaven; others by the ruder hands of mortals like themselves; millions by the sword and spear, and ten millions by the swifter and more unavoidable stroke of the arrow and bullet: Whilst not a few have received their death from the very elements which supported their life. An unruly fire has crumbled some into their first atoms, and mingled their ashes with those of their houses and beds of repose: Whilst water, a contrary principle, has quenched the vital flame in others. There is but one way to enter into this life; but the gates of death and the invisible state are without number: And the greatest Monarch may as well fall by the prick of a thorn, as by the edge of a sword. Every time I swallow my meat, I remember the fate of him that was choaked by a grain of pepper; and that of Anacreon, the poet, who was strangled by the stone of a raisin.

Yet I am not solicitous in chusing or avoiding particular deaths, knowing that no human counsel can prevent the decrees of destiny. It rather pleases me to think (such is my ambition) that, by whatsoever method I am sent to the grave, there I shall be equal to the Alexanders, Cæsars, Timurlengs, and the greatest mortals; for there is no distinction of noble and vulgar in that region of anarchy, where all ranks are levelled in the dust: As Diogenes told

Alexander the Great; when the Monarch, beholding that philosopher in a charnel-house, his eyes attentively fixed on the bones of the dead which lay in heaps, asked him, What he was doing? To which Diogenes replied, 'I am looking for thy father Philip's bones, but cannot distinguish them from those of his slaves.' Some such thought as this might, perhaps, first occasion the custom of writing epitaphs on the sepulchres of eminent persons. Among which I have read some made by the intombed themselves, whilst they were on this side the grave, and for their singular fancy were thought worthy to be recorded by historians. Such as this:

I Sabbas of Milan, by blood a Castilian, Priest and Knight of Jerusalem, with a happy resurrection to my ashes. While I was alive among mortals, a little satisfied me. Now I am dead, and alone in my grave, I am content with less. I neither knew myself what I was; nor do thou inquire. Traveller, whoever thou art, if thou be pious, pray for me, and pass on. Farewell, and live mindful of death. Living, I provided this epitaph, knowing I must die.

The birth and life of mortals are nothing but toil and death.

Such another was that of Heliodorus, a Moor; who caused himself to be buried near to the pillars of Hercules, with this inscription on his tomb:

I Heliodorus, a mad Carthaginian, have commanded by my last will and testament, that I should be interred here in the farthest angle of the world; to make experiment, whether

whether any man, more mad than myself, would travel thus far to visit my sepulchre.

But that which Semiramis caused to be inscribed on her tomb was a perfect satire on the living. It was this :

I Semiramis, whilst living, never was in need of money; yet was always compassionate to the poor. Now I am dead, my grave is my treasury. If any of royal race be in want, let him open this dormitory, and he shall find a supply.

When Darius conquered Babylon, and was told of this epitaph; stung with avarice, he caused the sepulchre to be opened in his own presence. But; instead of money, they only found a tablet of brass, with these words engraven on it:

My epitaph is a riddle. This is the interpretation: I never was covetous; only such as are poor, these I pity; and have therefore provided this lesson as a treasure, for the man who, for lucre, shall presume to violate my tomb

If thou wilt rob the living, forbear to plunder the dead, lest they bring thee to shame, as I have done.

Thou tellest me, that the Emperor seems not to be much grieved for the death of his son, the Roman King. Perhaps, his sorrow is so great, that it cannot find a vent. Violent and uncommon passions are apt to smother within the heart, whilst only smaller griefs break forth into tears.

It was a memorable saying of a certain King of Egypt, who was overcome by Cambyfes the Persian Monarch, and taken captive, with all his children ; when the cruel Conqueror, to sport himself in the misery of his royal prisoners, and insult over the vanquished Egyptians, first caused the daughter of the captive King to be employed in the meanest offices with the common slaves, before her father's face : Then his son to be bridled and curbed like a horse, with a vast burthen tied on his back. At both which dismal spectacles, the poor Egyptian Monarch shed not one tear : But, when he saw one that had formerly been his servant, reduced to great poverty, he wept bitterly. Cambyfes asking him the reason, why he seemed so insensible of his children's calamity, and yet was touched with so tender a grief for the misfortune of a stranger ? He answered, ' Son of Cyrus, the desolation of my family afflicts me with so profound a sorrow, that no tears can express it : But my compassion to this distressed servant, being not so violent, easily breaks forth into tears.'

Nathan, I wish thee neither extreme joy nor grief, for they are both hurtful to the heart.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER III.

To Mahummed Hodgja, venerable Eremite
of the cave, replete with wonders.

WHEN I contemplate thy life so full of innocence, and void of the very shadow of vice, I am like a serpent roused from his sleep by a breeze of cooler wind, or the noise of a traveller on the road : My soul starts ; and, unfolding all the drowsy curls of sensuality, stretches itself at full length :
Sur-

Surprised and ashamed of its own lethargy, it swiftly retires into a dark corner, to cover itself from the light of its own faculties; and from the brighter reflections of thy spirit, which penetrate like the beams of the sun.

I do not presently curse myself, the hour of my nativity, my friends that have flattered me into an erroneous belief of my own virtue, or my enemies that have provoked me, and by various trains intangled me in the paths of vice. Such malediction only becomes the mouth of a Jew, or a libertine: For we arrive at perfection, not by cursing the evil, but by imitating the good.

I had rather bless the hour of conjunction, the influence of my better stars, and the constellations of a more propitious horoscope, the moment when I had the honour to touch the sand before thy feet with my lips to that sanctuary of holiness. Oh thou patron of good intentions; sincere reformer of human errors: Refulgent pattern of the pious; glory of the wise; most excellent of the excellent, Phoenix of the age!

Praise be to God, the first and the last: Peace to the angels who stand round his throne, and to the prophets who rejoice in his presence. An universal jubilee to all the inhabitants of Paradise: And eternal felicity to the saint of the desert on earth, whose soul is expanded wide as the firmament.

I am ravished, and full of ecstasies, because there is not found thy equal on this side the clouds. When thou shalt be cropped from the earth, the mirror of mortals, the flower of human nature is gone. The trees of the wilderness will lament thy death, by whose presence they flourished and brought forth their fruit in due season. At thy departure the grass of the field will fade and wither, conscious that thy merits drew down the rain and dew of heaven to render Arabia fertile in herbage.

The beasts will languish for want of pasture, and men will bewail the dearth of the land; knowing, that

that the life of the just causes the ground to produce a plenteous harvest.

But no mourning will be like that of Mahmut, who can boast of thy particular friendship; and in losing thee will be as if he were deprived of the light of the sun, or the morning air, or the benefit of fire and water: For so thy favours are refreshing as the elements, without which we cannot live.

Therefore as oft as I turn my face to the city, sanctified by the birth of our holy Prophet; I send up my vows to Heaven for thy long life; beseeching God, for the universal good of nature, to continue the man on earth, the vestment of whose soul is composed of rays darted from all the fortunate stars.

Tell me, O thou holiest of the holy ones in the East; favourite of the angels; secret friend of the Eternal; Envoy Extraordinary from the Omnipotent; Agent incognito for the Court of Heaven! Tell me by what chart I shall steer my course through this life, uncertain as the sea, and tossed with as many tempests. I find in myself manifest inclinations to virtue, and whatsoever is good; yet I still mistake the methods of attaining my end. I would fain be perfectly pious, just, and wise; but know not how to compass my design. One event or other still frustrates my labour: Either a friend or an enemy, a relation or a stranger, casualties without, or the passions within, stop me in the beginning, or the midst of a glorious career, the race which cannot be run without noble agonies.

Then I take breath, and, rousing myself with fresh vigour, I cheerfully address to the combat, which crowns the victor with immortality. My courage is great, my resolution fixed, at the first setting out: I gain ground on a sudden; the wheels of my chariot are, for a time, like those of the sun, those momentary advances are not perceived by mortals. But, before I get half-way to the meridian, some unskilful Phaëton, an erroneous thought, or a giddy passion overthrows me. Either old habits, or new
tempta-

temptations, hinder me from gaining the prize in the Olympicks of virtue.

Thus, often foiled, I retire with shame and weakness; and, finding no redress within, I fly to thee, who art created a director of the world.

It will be an offence to make repetitions, and ask counsel again: I will henceforth endeavour to follow thy example, which is certainly the most correct rule of a religious life. But then I cannot serve the Grand Signior in this post. Resolve my doubts. Is it lawful for me to abandon my duty, and retire into a desert? If not, I will erect a solitude in the midst of this populous city, and build an hermitage in my own heart. If I cannot arrive at the perfections I aim at, I will at least endeavour to be as good as I can. There is a religious dexterity, by which a man may, in the midst of worldly business, make for himself paths of innocence, and walk free from the general contagion of mortals. If I cannot perform any eminent good, I will take care to abstain from enormous evils: Neither will I commit the least, without a good intention; which, I am assured by the Mufti, sometimes sanctifies a bad action. If I lye, or forswear myself, it shall be to serve my great Master. If I dissemble my religion, and counterfeit a Christian, I will propose to myself the greater advantage of the Mussulman faith: Thus some higher end shall always direct my intention and performances.

But, if thou wilt tell me after all, that this is not the way to Paradise, I will forsake all worldly interest, wherein I find so many intanglements, and take up my residence in some humble cave, or cleft of a rock, or hollow of a tree; where I will spend the rest of my days in contemplating the first Essence, and all that flows from it. I will bid a final adieu to this perfidious age, to the vain generation of mortals that live in it, to whose converse I shall have reason to prefer that of the beasts, who are far more innocent, and less debauched than men. For lions and tigers, in the utmost fury of their hunger;

abstain from preying on those of their kind. *Mari* is the only Cannibal, who devours his brother, and greedily swallows down the blood of him who bears the same image as himself.

I speak not of the ancient Scythians, *Massagetes*, or *Tartars*; nor of the more modern savages in *America*, who stuffed their greedy paunches with human flesh. Their barbarism has crept, by transmigration, into the most civilised empires and states; and is not the less cruel, because it has changed its form.

Nor do I tax the more excusable epicureism of those, who ransack all the elements for dainties; whose tables are loaded with the slaughtered carcases of birds, beasts and fishes; their houses polluted with an extravagant profusion of the blood of those creatures, which the eternal Mind formed to live, and enjoy the fruits of the earth, as well as ourselves.

But I accuse the oppressors of men, those Cannibals in disguise, whose very bread is mingled with the marrow of the poor; and their greater delicacies are ragouts, compounded of the blood of widows and orphans; whilst they starve and ruin whole families to support a needless grandeur, a momentary pomp, which vanishes almost as soon as it appears.

Yet these men think to pacify Heaven, by building magnificent temples and oratories; by intailing their estates on convents and hospitals: As if the Omnipotent were to be bribed; or took pleasure in gifts, which are but the fruits of robbery and injustice. Can the sacrifices of Infidels be more acceptable, because they are made on altars of gold? Or even the prayers of Mussulmans, in that they are breathed out in mosques built of the finest marble crusted over with precious stones and adorned with carpets and hangings of the richest tissues and brocades? The ancient Pagans can instruct us better.

Thou wilt not think me tedious, if I relate a passage, which just came into my mind, of a certain man in Asia, who possessed vast herds of cattle,
and

and was accustomed to make magnificent oblations to the gods. This Grandee once made a pilgrimage to Delphos, famous in those days for the oracle of Apollo. He carried with him an hundred bulls, whose horns were incased in gold, being spurred on with extraordinary devotion, and designing to do a singular honour to the god. When he arrived at the place, puffed up with his costly present, and the flatteries of his attendants, he boldly approached the temple, thinking no man on earth more worthy of the god's friendship than himself; demanding of the Pythoness (for so they called the woman who performed the office of priesthood there) Who, among all mortals, made the most acceptable sacrifices, and departed with the greatest blessing from the oracle? (for he presumed the pre-eminence would be granted to himself.) When she answered, 'That one Clearchus of Methydrium was the most devout and dear to the gods, of all men.'

Astonished above measure, at this unexpected reply, the vain bigot resolved to find out this man, and learn of him what method he took to please the divinity. He hastens therefore to Methydrium: And, when he first came within view of it, he despised the meanness of the place, judging it impossible that one man, or all the town, could be able to present the gods with more magnificent oblations than he. Having found out Clearchus, he asked him, What sacrifices he used to make to Apollo? To whom Clearchus replied, "I am a poor man, and, when I go to Delphos, I carry neither silver nor gold, but only a basket of fruits, the best that my farm affords, which I freely offer to the powers which govern all things, and from whom I receive whatsoever I enjoy. Moreover, I keep the appointed holy days; and my poorer neighbours go chearful from my table. I never killed any thing: Nor have I done to another that which I would not have done to myself. I pray to Jupiter every morning before the sun arises, and at night when he goes down. I keep myself and my cottage clean."

“clean. In all things else I live like the beasts,
“that is, according to nature.”

Thou wilt perceive by this, O pious Eremite, that simplicity and innocence are the most acceptable sacrifice to the supremely Merciful. And that the most high God takes no pleasure in the smoke of burnt-offerings, or the pompous addresses of the great; but only the pure flames of a devout heart; the integrity of a just man, void of deceit and guile.

Thou, illustrious Mahummed. art the person in whom these things are verified. May God shelter thee with his mercies, to the hour of transmigration, and beyond the last flight of time.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER IV.

To the Kaimacham.

THERE are two actions which take up all the discourse at present. One is the siege of Ste-nay, a strong town in Flanders, before which the French army is newly laid down. The other is the investing of Arras by the Spaniards.

It is the presence of many illustrious personages, that renders both these sieges considerable. In the French camp are present the King, Cardinal Mazarine, and all the Grandees of the Court. In the Spanish are Arch-duke Leopold, the Prince of Conde, Francis Duke of Lorraine, with others of prime quality.

They are very vigorous on both sides, in pressing and defending these two places; as if the fate of both kingdoms were now at stake. In my opinion France runs the greatest hazard: For, if the Spaniards should prove successful in what, it is said, they have resolved upon, that is, the relief of Ste-nay;

hay; if they should give battle, and get the victory, a way would be open for them to penetrate into the bowels of France. And it is thought many towns in this kingdom would open their gates to them, whilst the Prince of Conde is at the head of their army, who does all things in the name of the French King: Even his rebellion itself is masqued under the specious title of 'taking up arms to rescue the captive King from the hands of Mazarine and his adherents.' A pretty way of seducing the people from their obedience. The partisans, and indeed all the French, are divided into cabals and parties; some espousing the Prince of Conde's interest, whilst others manifest an incorruptible loyalty to their Sovereign. I approve the morals of the latter, yet privately rejoice at the treasons of the former, wishing their intestine quarrels may continue till the day of the earthquake.

Eliachim the Jew follows the Court, which rather ought now to be called the Camp. His private affairs call him that way: From him I receive frequent advice of the most important matters in that theatre of war. He informs me, that the King of France's presence in the siege of Stenay inspires his soldiers with more than ordinary vigour: And that he shews daily proofs of an extraordinary courage. He was one whole night on horseback, giving orders, and directing his engineers. Next morning he sends a summons to the Governor, who made a stout reply, being resolved to hold out to the last extremity; and therefore sallied out of the town with a party of resolute men, who killed near four thousand of the besiegers.

But, alas! these Infidels are only stout, whilst well fed: Not knowing what it is to endure the rigours of famine and other intolerable hardships. In all the western histories, they cannot match the bravery of a garrison in the impregnable fortress of Mardin, famous in our annals for sustaining a seven years siege, where the mighty Timurleng lay before it with his invincible army. That scourge of Heaven, to
terrify

terrify the besieged, and give them an earnest of his resolution, caused all the old trees round about this place to be cut down, and young ones to be planted in far greater numbers : Declaring at the same time, " That he would not raise the siege, till those trees " should be mature enough to bear fruit : " When that time came, he sent a present of the fruits to the Governor of the garrison ; as likewise of mutton, with this message, " That he took pity on so brave " a man, fearing lest he should starve for want of " necessaries."

As soon as the Governor had received these presents, turning to the messenger, he said, " Go tell " thy master, I thank him for his present of fruits : " But, for the flesh, we shall have no occasion, so " long as our ewes afford us milk enough to sustain " the whole garrison. And, that thy master may be " assured we are not in want of that, I will send him " a present of cheeses made of the same." Accordingly, he commanded four cheeses to be delivered to the messenger ; which, when Timurleng saw, and had heard the words of the Governor, he despaired of reducing that place, though he had laid before it seven years, wanting only two moons. But, had he understood what sort of cheeses these were, he would, no doubt, have changed his resolution ; for, it seems, they were made of the milk of bitches, and were the very last sustenance the garrison had, except the flesh itself of those unclean animals.

Believe me, sage Minister, such examples of patience and fortitude are very rare. And this was the more remarkable, in that it was the first place, where that invincible General's hand met with a repulse.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER

LETTER V.

To Dgnet Oglou.

THIS is the anniversary day of my nativity; which I celebrate not, as others do, on such an occasion, with mirth and revelling, with musick and songs. My chamber is not perfumed with the incense of Arabia, nor with any extraordinary odours: Neither is it adorned with flowers, laurel, or the branches of green trees. I am not at the expence of costly oils, to burn in a multitude of lamps, and make joyful illuminations, as at a feast. Such pompous vanity I leave to those, who, perhaps, have more reason to be merry in this life, than the thoughtful and pensive Mahmut can find out.

On the other side, I spend not this day in extreme and fruitless mourning: But, retaining an indifference of mind, I consecrate it to the service of my reason and contemplation; which are the only things considerable in mortal man.

From the minute that I first awaked this morning, I have been pondering on myself and human nature. I suffered my anxious thoughts to start back beyond the hour of my birth, reflecting on the imprisonment I suffered in my mother's womb, which yet I cannot in the least remember. And this is the case of all men. We know not how we came into this open world of light, from that region of darkness; nor that ever we were so shut up, but as we are told by our parents; and common experience confirms us, that this is the lot of all mortals. How then shall we be able to discover what state we were in before our conception? Whether we were in the rank of things which have existence, or whether we were not hid in the womb of nothing? I tell thee, this thought has filled me with great inquietudes. I am restless to know my own original. I would fain be informed, if that which they call the soul be
a sub-

a substance distinct from the body, or only a finer part of matter, a quintessence of the elements. If it be distinct, as I have reason to believe, it would be a singular happiness to be satisfied where it was, before united to this machine of flesh and bones; and whether that union be voluntary or forced: For I must profess myself to be altogether in the dark, as to these scrutinies. Sometimes I join with the Platonists, and conclude all human souls to be particles of the divine nature, beams of the eternal sun; and, that though our light be now obscured and veiled under the clouds of earthly matter, yet we have formerly shined with an undiminished splendor, when only imbodied in the clearer air, or more refined substance of the sky. Perhaps, I think, for some errors committed in that superior state, we are sent down into these bodies, as into prison, for our punishment. Then I am vexed at the fatal dulness of my memory, that retains no idea of my past condition.

At other times (for like all mortals I am subject to change) I embrace the doctrines of Pythagoras, which thou knowest are generally entertained all over the East: And, believing the transmigration of souls from one living creature to another, I cannot be certain but that I have been an elephant, a camel, or a horse, or perhaps some more contemptible animal; and, for aught I know, I have undergone all the various kinds of metamorphosis that ever Ovid mentioned.

However, be it how it will, I see no grounds to make any extravagant solemnity on the account of my being born to what I am now, that is, a man; for I think we are the only spectacles of folly and misery, among all the creatures of God.

We boast of arts and sciences; yet the wisest of mortals are always most sensible, 'that they know nothing.' One man builds a stately house, a place of repose and refuge for himself and his family; another comes and pulls it down, demolishing the only standing monument of his brother's prudence, or rather

ther of his folly, who, perhaps, consumed the greatest part of his estate in that costly fabrick: Whereas, among all his sciences, had he but learned to 'know himself,' an humble, convenient cottage would have served his necessities, during his short life, and so he might have avoided the stroke of envy.

I tell thee, my friend, I cannot build altars to Fortune, nor adore the external pageantry of the rich and great. I equally hate to be flattered myself, as those who invite their friends to solemnise their birth-day.

Yet, in thus contemning external honour, I do the greatest reverence to myself, whilst I preserve my reason free from being violated or prophaned by foolish customs.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER VI.

To the Sélictar Aga, or Sword-bearer to the
Grand Signior.

Sometimes we seem to be asleep here in this city for want of news. But of late we have been roused by post upon post: Some bringing intelligence of the surrender of Stenay to the French King; others of the revolt of Barcelona from the Spaniards. But that which is of freshest date, and for which all the streets of Paris are this night illuminated with bonfires, is the relief of Arras, where the French have obtained a glorious victory. The number of the dead is not yet known, but said to be very great. And it is certain the victors have taken above seven thousand prisoners, sixty cannon, five thousand waggon, an equal number of horses, with all the plate and rich furniture of the Prince of Conde, Archduke Leopold, Francis of Lorraine, and the other
Grandeess

Grandees of the Spanish army. In fine, the French are masters of the town, and of the field, and all Flanders appears too little now to hold them.

These continual successes redound much to the establishment of Cardinal Mazarine, who now seems above the stroke of misfortune or malice. Yet no man can call himself happy till the hour of his death, which alone releases us from all human miseries.

Some days ago, I received a letter from Nathan Ben Saddi, which informs me of the death of the Roman King, and of several prodigies which were seen before, and about the time of his departure.

When he was first taken sick, there arose a violent tempest of wind, which blew down the cross from one of their churches. After this followed a terrible earthquake that shook the whole city, threatening to remove its foundations. Moreover, an old eagle, a domestick of the Imperial palace, and that had lived there many years, took wing the day before the King's sickness, and flew quite away. Then the bells of the Imperial chapel rung thrice, of their own accord, in the space of twelve hours. Thus far the Jew assures me is true. There are additional reports of strange apparitions that were seen about Vienna during the sickness of this Prince, as of a funeral procession after midnight, through the courts of the palace; and of a shower of warm blood that fell at noon-day in the streets of that city. But these I have only from the mouth of common fame, which, thou knowest, does not always speak truth.

I desire thee and all the Ministers to make distinction between those passages which I ascertain, and the doubtful relations of the multitude. In these cases, men are prone to superstition, and love to be the authors of portentous news. But thou mayest believe what the Jew relates, for he never affects to be fabulous.

It would tempt one to ask, What strange hidden power produces these unusual signs? Whether we mortals are under the custody of invisible beings
who

who teach the elements and other creatures to utter the future events of fate? or, whether all these things which appear so strange and surprising, be not mere casualties; accidents of nature happening of course, and only made remarkable by their timing? Who knows, but that the voluntary ringing of the bells might proceed from the motion of the tower where they hung, during the earthquake? Or, Why need we wonder, that a cross or a crescent should be blown down from the top of a high minaret by a violent tempest of wind?

These things appear to me as natural, as for the rain to lodge all the corn in the fields; or for a storm to tear up the trees by the roots, overturn houses, and commit a thousand other violences. Neither do I perceive any thing worthy admiration in the flight of the eagle. Perhaps some royal caprice sprung in the head of that King of birds, which he never felt before. There is nothing of prodigy in all this, but only because it happened at such a critical juncture. Had it been at another time, nobody, perhaps, would have taken notice of it, any more than they do of earthquakes at Naples, which are common in that country, where the earth is very hollow, being made so by veins of continual burning sulphur. They have felt several in that kingdom within these two moons, as also at Rome; but no great hurt has been done.

Nathan informs me also, that the Venetian Ambassador at Vienna has distributed great sums of money, in token of his joy, for the late victory that Republick obtained against the Mussulmans. This appears to me a real prodigy, that the Ottomans, who are invincible by land, yet still come off with loss at sea.

Queen Christina of Sweden is expected here e're long. She came to Antwerp in the habit of a man, which occasions variety of censures. The French call her the learned Amazon, she being well versed in many languages and sciences. They extol her virtues and perfection, styling her the Phoenix of the age.

age. All the western Nazarenes are devout admirers of women : And one of their famous sages, whom they call Henry Cornelius Agrippa, wrote a select treatise in praise of that sex ; wherein he endeavours to prove, that they are more excellent and noble creatures than men. But he would find few proselytes in the East.

It is certain there have been very famous women in all ages, and it would be envy in men to deny them their due praise. Such was Dido, Queen of Carthage ; the Roman Lucretia, the Sybils, Theana, Pythagoras's wife, with his daughter Dama ; Sappho the poetess, with innumerable others, both of East and West, renowned for their virtue, learning, or valour in the wars. But it does not follow, that they therefore surpass men.

Let us keep the rank in which God and nature have placed us, without being churlish or effeminate. And this is the best way to get and retain the esteem of that nice sex, who hate a clown, and despise a coward.

Paris, 30th of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER VII.

To Pesteli Hali, his Brother, Master of the
Customs at Constantinople.

THOU art he to whom I can unmask : With others I converse (like our women in Turkey) under a veil. When I write to the Grandees of the Porte, it is necessary for me to dissemble many things, and to feign some, that I may be credited in others, and not be suspected in all. But with thee I use no artifice or disguise : Thou hast a kind of natural right to my secret thoughts beyond the claim of a brother. I owe thee an intire confidence

fidence on the score of friendship ; and I seem to wrong myself, when I conceal my sentiments from thee. For, besides the tie of blood, we were partners together in the adventures of youth ; and the mutual good offices that past between us fastened our affection with stronger bands than those of our birth. Nor were we so unhappy as to suffer the little youthful emulations, which are common between sons of the same mother, to stifle the more solid and generous efforts of real love. Our friendship grew up with our years, cemented by interest as well as affection ; and I esteem Pesteli but myself in another figure. If thou hast the same regard to me, I am happy. Let us continue to cherish this noble passion. The least coldness or reserve now would appear to me more hateful than a divorce, more terrible than death.

It is but reasonable that, among the many services our great Master claims at our hands, we should employ some of our time and care to ourselves. We owe the Sultan much, but both he and we owe nature more, without whose bounty and providence, we had never had the honour, or he the profit of our being in his debt. He is more deeply engaged in Fortune's tally than we ; but in the accounts of nature we are all equal. She is the universal creditor of mankind. We are indebted to her for all we have ; yet, methinks, nothing so much inances our score, as the ill management of time : In that we still run in arrears, whilst the hasty minutes pass forward, never to be revoked : And yet we neither lay hold on them in their flight, nor so much as imprint on any of them the least transient mark of virtue and wisdom. Thus our lives slide away without profit, till the last sand tells us, ' We are bankrupts ; nature will not trust us with a moment longer.

It is time, therefore, dear brother, for thee and me to look about us ; and, since it is impossible for us to make full payment, let us at least compound with nature, and, getting an acquittance for what is past and irrecoverable, let us be sure to cancel the remaining

remaining part of the score by a wise improvement of every minute.

Think not that Mahmut is persuading thee to turn Dervise, or to bestow all thy time in prayers : Such rigorous devotion is not consistent with the life of a man in thy station. But permit me, dear Pesteli, to counsel thee not to build altars to Fortune, and consecrate all thy vacant hours to her service. I am told, thou art grown a great gamester, not only at the polemick traverses of chess, but also at plays of hazard : The former of the two is the most innocent, yet it is too intricate and puzzling, deserves the name of business rather than of recreation : It commits a rape on the mind, whilst it requires as much attention and abstractedness of thought, as would deserve to trace out the conduct of a battle or a siege. But the latter have a far worse influence on our passions, by exciting us to immoderate desire, hope, joy, and grief, for mere trifles, the uncertain products of chance. Therefore are they forbidden by our holy Prophet. And it is not to be numbered among the commendations of a Mussulman to be dextrous at managing the cards and dice.

When thou art disposed to unbend thy mind, I would rather counsel thee to use some healthful exercise ; such as may ventilate thy melancholy blood. Our fathers were wont, at such times, to divert themselves with bows and arrows, hunting, wrestling, and the like manly pastimes ; thus making their private recreations subservient to the publick, whilst they sported themselves into the discipline of war, and inured their bodies to labour, even at those hours, when their minds sought rest.

What ! though Claudius Cæsar devoted himself to gaming with dice, and wrote a book in praise of his folly. What ! though Domitian the Emperor, and Theodorick, King of the Goths, spent whole nights and days in this unprofitable play ? Thou hast not read or heard of such examples among the renowned sons of Ottoman. Our glorious Sultans were never vacant to these fooleries. And, if they had,

had, their practices cannot justify a subject's imitation. Neither wouldest thou be so in love with gaming, didst thou consider what unhappy destinies have commonly attended the votaries of Fortune. Whole estates have been squandered away at dice in a night, families ruined and the gamester himself imprisoned in the morning. He that yesterday was master of great possessions, and a companion for Princes, by the effects of this accursed vanity, has bereaved himself of all, and is to-day become the scorn of beggars.

The Chinese are so bewitched with love of gaming, that, when they have lost all their stakes, they pawn themselves, their wives and children; which, if the fortune of the dice turn against them, become all bond-slaves to the winner. Here is a dervise in this city, of the Order of the Jesuits, who lately came from China. Among other learned men, I sometimes converse with him. He relates many pretty passages of that people, but one is tragical, whereof he himself was an eye-witness.

He says, that, in the province of Queintong, a certain Nobleman who had served in the war, and acquired great fame and honour, was envied by one of his neighbours, who likewise had been a Captain, and much in favour at the Court. Their emulations carried them to many ill offices, and at last to open defiance. The Emperor, being made sensible of the hatred that was between these two Officers, and being unwilling their fury should precipitate them to the ruin of each other, became himself an arbitrator of their quarrel; laying his commands on them to embrace and eat together, which is an assured token of reconciliation and friendship in that country. They obeyed the will of their Sovereign. But, sitting up late one night at dice, it was the Captain's ill fortune to lose all he had to the Nobleman. Mad at his unlucky chance, and in hopes to retrieve his loss, he sends for his wife and three young sons, whom, with himself, he pawned to the Nobleman for a considerable sum of money, and fell afresh to play:

But Fate was his enemy; he lost all. Whereupon in despair he stabs his wife and three children, and, lastly, falls on his sword; glorying, that he and his family should thus escape a hated captivity to his old enemy.

Tell me, dear Pesteli, Hadst thou seen this tragedy, would it not have made thee resolve against gaming during thy life? Assuredly, our Holy Prophet frowns from his Paradise, on those who violate his laws. He knew our passions, and which were the most dangerous; therefore he prohibited such things as are most likely to betray us to violence and an incurable disorder. If thou wilt acquit thyself a good Mussulman, thou must not leap over these prohibitions, accounting them small and indifferent trifles. Remember the saying of the holy Doctor, and Leader of the Mussulman armies, the chaste Osman, 'A little spark will set a whole city on fire.' And the Roman satyrist has observed, 'That no man becomes wicked all at once.' Think then with thyself, it is for this reason the Messenger of God has forbid gaming to the true faithful, not as a thing in itself naturally evil, but only morally so, as it is a step to the greatest vice. For, whilst we captivate ourselves to chance, we lose our authority over our passions. We stand or fall at the uncertain cast of the dice. We are slaves to the feeblest wishes; which, if they succeed not, we grow furious, profligate, and impious. Banishing all prudence, temperance, and justice, we become impudent, and fit for the blackest crimes.

Take not in ill part the wholesome admonition of a brother, who manifests his love in thus reproofing thee without flattery. Use the same freedom when thou hearest I am guilty of any unnecessary vice: For the publick service turns some vices into virtues.

Paris, 14th of the 10th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

L E T.

LETTER VIII.

To the Reis Effendi, Principal Secretary of
the Ottoman Empire.

I Believe thou hast a mind to try my temper, so make an experiment upon me, and see whether I am proof against thy anger: Else, Why should Kenan Bassa's business be revived again, after it had been buried above these four years? I examine not what mighty interest thou hast in that Officer, that thou afresh espoudest his old quarrel, as if it were thy own. Thy affairs are best known to thyself. But let me tell thee, it will not redound much to thy credit to be found partial. I honour thee with all the devoir that is due to a Minister in thy station, and with something more, for the esteem a man has for his friend is singular and beyond ceremonies: But still he owes some regard to himself. Self-preservation is rooted in the center of our nature; and few will be knowingly complaisant to their ruin. I am puzzled what to think, or how to write, thy last letter has put me into such a hurry-burry. A thousand imaginations, like whirlwinds, tear up my most solid thoughts by the roots. I am in as wild a condition as a man in an earthquake, leaping this way and that way, yet knows not where to fix his foot in safety.

If I persevere in calling thee friend, perhaps thou wilt accuse me of presumption. If I change my style, and suppose thee under another character, ingratitude will be laid to my charge. To vindicate my actions will be interpreted obstinacy; and to own myself in the fault will be counted weakness: Nay, all the world will call me fool, in condemning myself for things, whereof I never was guilty. What shall I do in this case? I am naturally thoughtful and melancholy. The words that spring from resentment cleave fast to my mind, and breed

abbies, and other ecclesiastical dignities, at her own rates, and to whom she pleased. In fine, whosoever had any business with the Pope made their addresses to her. By which means she has heaped together a prodigious treasure, and is esteemed the richest Lady in Europe. It is thought she would have sold even the Pope, and Rome itself, the capital seat of the Christian empire, rather than refused a proportionate offer of gold, could she have met with a chapman to her mind. This would have been a merchandise fit for the Grand Signior, were it not reserved as a prize for the victorious arms destined to conquer all things.

The French seem mightily concerned for the tragedies acted in Poland by the Muscovites. It is affirmed that they have taken the town of Vitebsko by storm (putting men, women, and children to the sword) with divers other cities and places of strength: And that they have laid in ashes all the towns and villages round about Smolensko; so that there is nothing to be seen but ruin and desolation, for above an hundred miles round that city; which also is now closely besieged by the forces of the Czar. If these northern Infidels go on, and make such bloody work where they come, they will in a short time over-run and dispeople all Europe. But it is to be hoped the Tartars, who are lately entered into a league with Poland, will put a stop to the cruel victories of the Muscovites, and chastise the treason of the Cossacks, who join with them contrary to their faith given to the King of Poland.

They say four Grandees of Tartary are arrived as hostages at Warsaw, and as many Lords of Poland are sent on the same errand to the Court of the Chan; who, as a farther evidence of his integrity, has released all the Polish captives in his dominions, and sent the Ambassadors of the Cossacks home, without their noses and ears, as a mark of his irreconcilable indignation at their infidelity.

In the mean while I am extremely afflicted to hear of our continual losses by sea. They say here, that a-

bore

bove six thousand Mussulmans were killed in the late fight in the Hellespont ; and that we have lost sixteen gallies, besides ships of war. That element, one would conclude, is fatal to the Ottoman empire. Neither have we had much better success by land this campaign. Yet Chusacra, the Vizir Azem, and General in Candia, has performed very heroick things. To speak impartially, and give due honour to our enemies, the Malteses, Venetians, and French have not been wanting in any point of bravery. Which also redounds to the greater honour of the Mussulmans, in that they drew their sword against the flower of Christendom, and not against owls and pigmies. Such are the Persians, when we encounter them ; for either they dare not endure the lustre, and stand the brunt of our invincible arms ; or, if they do, they sink under the first thock.

When I name these Hereticks, I spit on the ground in detestation of their errors : For they are worse than the Zindicks and Giafers. I have more charity for a Christian or a Jew, than I have for these vermin of the land. In fine, I wish they were extirpated from the earth ; and that they may, after this life, be either metamorphosed into hogs, which creature, thou knowest, is an abomination to all good men and angels, (and they already resemble it in their uncleanness) or else that they may become the asses of the Jews in hell, to carry their burdens for a thousand ages.

Paris, 17th of the 11th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER X.

To Pesteli Hali, his Brother, Master of the
Grand Signior's Customs.

THE God of our Fathers grant thee as much joy every minute of thy life, as I feel at this instant. Wilt thou know the occasion of this unusual transport? I hardly believe myself, when I tell thee of an adventure, the most surprising that ever happened to me since my arrival in this city. And perhaps thou wilt think I romance in relating it : But assure thyself, that, of a truth, Oucomiche, our mother, is at this time in Paris, with our cousin Isouf.

May a thousand soft passions thrill thy heart, when thou readest this news, as they did mine, when, at my chamber-door, I first saw, and knew the face of her that bare me, after I had given her over for dead long ago ; for I had heard no tidings of her these eleven years, Good God ! so strange and unexpected a sight had almost dismantled my senses, those outworks of the soul. For a while I stood still, astonished and trembling with ecstasy. I was not presently satisfied, whether I beheld a mortal or the ghost of one : For, they say, these appear in the same forms as they bore when alive. Neither age nor travel, with all other infirmities and crosses of human life, had so altered her complexion, but that I easily discerned the manifest features, lineaments, and air of my mother. I conclude, therefore, it must be she, or her apparition, if there be any such things.

These were my first thoughts, in that walking trance : But her voice and address soon put me out of doubt ; when, impatient to see me stand like one thunder-struck, she ran to me with open arms and tears of joy in her eyes, crying out with a tone and affection peculiar to women, ' Art thou alive, my
son

‘son Mahmut? Do these eyes see thee, or am I in a dream?’

For my part, I was as much upon the rapture as she, and hardly knew how to deport myself, or what to say or do. Yet the fear I was in, lest somebody in the house should over-hear us, and make ill consequences of this passionate interview, taught me a lesson of moderation and prudence. Wherefore I beckoned her to suppress her passions, and converse by signs, as the custom is at the mysterious Porte. Those silent expressions of our mutual love, joy, and admiration, were not less significant, because not clothed in words. Thou knowest there is eloquence enough in this mute language. And I was jealous of words, lest some inquisitive soul might understand us, though we conversed in Arabick.

After our first endearments and tenderesses were over, in which my cousin Isouf also had his share, (for we were all reciprocally overjoyed to see one another in this nest of Infidels) I began to consult the safety of us all three, in providing convenient lodgings for my mother and kinsman. In order to this, we made a visit to Eliachim the Jew, who entertained us at a banquet after the fashion of the East. We advised with the honest Hebrew about our affairs, I having made frequent and sufficient proof of his fidelity and friendship. In fine, he took them both into his house, under the notions of Greeks, his acquaintance; judging this the securest way to prevent any discovery, or even the least suspicion of our circumstances. They have continued there these five days, and their character has not been questioned by any. I visit them daily, and we pass away many hours in recounting the different adventures of our lives, in discoursing of our friends in Arabia, Greece, and other parts of the world, and in concerting the best methods to serve one another, till death shall divide us from ourselves, as well as from our friends, and rank us in

the list of invifible beings, whole ftate and quality we know not.

Well, but, all this while, I believe thou art impatient to know what motive of their own, or turn of fortune, drove them into fo remote a region as France, a country inhabited by none but Infidels : Shall I tell thee in a word ? It was love on her part, and the defire of novelty on his.

Our coufin Ifouf, from his childhood, felt powerful inclinations to travel, which increafed with his years, and were much heightened by his converse with Greeks, Armenians, Franks, and fome Muffulmans at Conftantinople, who had feen many foreign countries both in the Eaft and Weft.

The relations they made of the curiofities they had feen, and of their own adventures, fired his youthful blood, and he formed a refolution to depart, with the firft convenience from Conftantinople, and vifit all the regions in the world, if his life and health would hold out. I formerly acquainted thee, that he furveyed the greateft part of Afia : Since which he fet forth again ; and, having finifhed his travels in that quarter of the world, he bent his courfe for Africk ; where he vifited Egypt, Barbary, the empire of Morocco and Fez ; with that of the Æthiopians, and many other regions under the torrid zone, too tedious for me at this time to mention particularly, becaufe I write in hafte. Hereafter I fhall give thee a more particular account of his obfervations, &c. wherein thou wilt find, that Ifouf has not altogether loft his time.

At length, having fatisfied himfelf with whatever he thought worthy to be feen and known in that fouthern tract, he parted from Fez with a defign to fee Europe. Some bills of Exchange caufed him to take Grand Cairo in his way, where he encountered my mother. She, perceiving that he would take fhipping directly for France, refolved to lay hold on fo favourable an opportunity of feeing me once more before ſhe died. Wherefore, imparting her defign to him, Ifouf offered her his utmoft ſervice.

vice. And, having settled her affairs at Cairo, and packed up her money, jewels, and other necessaries, they took the road of Scanderoon; where they soon arrived; and, putting themselves into the habit of Greeks, Isouf also speaking pretty well that language and the *Lingua Franca*, they bargained with the master of a vessel then lying in the harbour, and bound for *Marseilles*. He took them on board, and, under the protection and favour of Heaven, they arrived safe at *Marseilles*, and are now in this city.

Yet, amidst all the pleasure I conceive in the presence of so near a relation as a mother, I am not without some qualms of fear, lest some unfortunate occurrence should discover her to be no Christian: For then the issue might prove dangerous both to her and me.

As for Isouf, he designs to tarry no longer in Paris, than to inform himself of what is most remarkable in this city, and to satisfy the other ends of a traveller. From hence, after he has visited the chiefest cities in France, he talks of travelling into Flanders, Holland, Germany, Swedeland, and the other Kingdoms of Europe. But for Spain or Portugal he has no thoughts; either out of fear of the Inquisition, which is very severe in those countries; or out of an aversion to those people, who expelled the Moors, of which he relates very tragical stories, which they told him during his residence at Morocco and Fez. In a word, he gives this character of a Spaniard, that he is a mongrel, between a man and a devil. He likes the company of the French, in regard they converse with a natural and unreserved freedom, which becomes them very well. But he has spoke with none but travellers yet, who have been otherwise employed, than in studying the artificial disguise of courtiers. If he sojourns the space of three moons in this kingdom, he will find some of the French as affected in their way, as other people: He will encounter with a new sort of Frenchmen in every province. For France is a mere gallimaufry, made up of the fragments and remnants

of other nations. They differ also in their language, as well as in their manners, one from another. So that the inhabitants of Gascoigne and Bretagne can hardly be understood by those of Paris and Blois, with the adjacent parts. The western people are not curious in preserving the dialect of their fathers, but every age introduces a change in their speech: Neither are they diligent in retaining their genealogies: Whereas in the East, thou knowest, the languages remain uncorrupted, the same now as they were two thousand years ago, or from the Confusion of Babel. The same care we Arabians have of our tribes and families.

Son of my mother, when thou readest the two inclosed, and shalt see the very hand-writing of the dear Oucomiche, and Isouf, our kinsman, let thy heart be like the valley of Admoim, fragrant as a grove of spices: For then thy eyes will convince thee that what I write is truth.

Paris, 22d of the 11th Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER XI.

To Adonai, a Jew, Prisoner in the Tower
of Nona, at Rome.

THIS comes to thee by the hand of a trusty friend: Give intire credence to his instructions. To say, I am sorry to hear of thy misfortune would but faintly express my passion: It is not easily described in words: I am as melancholy as an antelope, when the Sun is in conjunction with Saturn. This is a sad sort of a beast, that will neither eat, drink, nor sleep, during that dull aspect.

In God's name, How camest thou to be so free with thy tongue among the Romans? Or, what tempted thee to meddle with their religion and laws?

Was

Was it not not enough, that thou, and all the Jews in that city, had liberty to frequent your synagogues, and there curse the Christians in antiquated Hebrew? Must you needs rail at them in plain Italian too? And that over your cups, when men ought to be good-natured to all the world? Of what import is it to you, whether they be idolaters or no, so long as they give you leave to adore one God, Creator of the world? Or, what signifies it, if they are guilty of ten thousand injustices and follies among themselves, whilst you live quietly under their protection and government? Adonai, I am ashamed of the immorality of those of thy nation. I blush for your ingratitude, pride, and malice. Surely, if the Nazarenes did really believe what they profess, they would sacrifice you all to the ghost of their Messias, whom, they say, you crucified. They would not leave a Jew living in Christendom, but do their utmost to exterminate you from the earth. I speak not this as my wish; but only to upbraid your impertinence and vanity, in thus foolishly provoking those, with whose permission it is that you live and enjoy the elements.

The prophet Moses, your law-giver, left you another rule, a lesson of civility, when he said, 'Ye shall not blaspheme the Gods of the people.' Had thou and thy companions obeyed this precept, ye might have been at liberty: But it is bad falling in to the hands of the Inquisition. However, I am glad to hear that you are not transported to the castle of St. Angelo; that would have been a tragical remove at this juncture. But now, as I am informed, not one of you is in danger: For they say, that all the prisoners in Rome are by custom released, upon the death of the Pope, except those who are in that fatal fortress. And it is generally supposed the good old Caliph is no long-lived man. For they never used to remove the prisoners designed for death, till the physicians are past all hopes of the Holy Father's life.

However,

However, in regard there is no certainty in human affairs, but a perpetual change and circulation of events; lest some unhappy turn of fortune should either now continue thy restraint, or hereafter bereave thee of thy liberty, I send thee, here inclosed, a receipt of a chymical liquor, which may be of some service to thee in the strongest prison on earth. It was revealed to me by my mother, who learned it of an Egyptian artist at Cairo. Despise it not; because it comes from a woman's hand: For I have made an experiment of it, and find it effectual. It will render iron as brittle as glass. It is more powerful than the water of the river Styx, which no vessel could hold but the hoof of a mule. After an hour's application, thou mayest make the thickest bars, chains, and bolts fly in a thousand pieces, as if they were made of porcelain.

Thou wilt not wonder at this, when thou considerest the innumerable strange inventions of men prying into the secrets of nature, and fortunate in their searches. Above all, chymistry has brought to light the greatest prodigies of art and knowledge: This mysterious science was the peculiar boast of the primitive Egyptians, from whence all other nations learned it. And, had not Moses himself been instructed from his youth in all the learning of Egypt, perhaps he would have been at a loss, when he calcined the golden calf, and gave the dust to the Israelites, to be mixed in their drink, as the only expiation of their idolatry. Doubtless, this secret, among others, was transmitted down to those times, from Philemon the good Priest, who was in the number of them who escaped the flood in Noah's ark, and whose grandson Masar was the first King in Egypt after the deluge.

Philemon, the better to establish the state of his offspring, revealed to them many hidden things: taught them the hieroglyphicks of the Dgebel Pharan, or the pyramids, with all the mysteries of the talismans, and the chymical preparations of Moncatam; the forcible waters and essences, powders and other

other ingredients, by which they made marble as pliable as wax or clay. These things he had learned of those who perished in the flood : He retained the wisdom of the ancients, his coevals and predecessors : leaving the rudiments of so profound a knowledge to his posterity, as an invaluable treasure, of which they could never be robbed. Thus science became hereditary to the Coptites, who bear that name from Coptim, the son of Masar, the first King of Egypt, since the rainbow appeared in the clouds. And it was from one of that race my mother learned that admirable secret.

Trust not to words, but try the experiment. The receipt will give thee all necessary directions : Yet I counsel thee not to be big with it, like him, who, having found out the art of making glass malleable. or fit to be beat by the hammer into any shape or figure, as the silversmiths work their metal, must needs go and discover his secret to the Prince, expecting a great reward : When, on the contrary, he lost his head on the spot ; the Prince thinking it great injustice, that so many thousand people as got their bread by making of common glasses should be all ruined, to promote one man's profit and advantage.

In fine, use this secret to save thyself, or the cause thou art engaged in : But trust it not to another, unless on the same equal terms as I commit it to thee, wherein the greater hazard is thine in divulging it.

Paris, 15th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LET-

L E T T E R XII.

To Mehemet, once an Eunuch Page in the Seraglio, but now an Exile in Egypt, at Grand Cairo.

WHEN I first heard of thy banishment from the imperial palace and city, think not that I was sad, or entertained the usual sentiments of a friend, on such occasions. No, I tell thee on the contrary, I rejoiced (yet not with the joy of an enemy) at that seeming misfortune, as knowing it has delivered thee from a real one, in which, according to my presages, all the attendants of thy mistress, the old Queen, were soon after involved.

Thou art obliged to Bacchus, for that fortunate calamity ; which, though it for a while eclipse thy honour, yet was the only means to save thy life.

When I formerly sent thee an account of my imprisonment here, and how I was regaled by my keeper at a banquet of wine ; when in that letter I played the advocate for the juice of the grape, I little thought that thou wouldst ever make an experiment of that bug-bear liquor. Though I know it is common, even in the Seraglio, to drink wine privately, and chase away melancholy, the constant familiar of restraint and servitude, with generous computations.

I am no stranger to the counterfeited sickness of those who, for the sake of this stolen mirth, put themselves into the infirmary, that they may there carouse with freedom, and drink healths to the Grand Signior without suspicion.

Were it not for the convenient situation of that apartment, and the favour of the Bostangi's, no wine could find admittance into the Seraglio, save what is for the Grand Signior's use. But now his slaves drink it as merrily as he : And I am not sorry that thou art one of the number. It is a groundless
super-

superstition to refuse the gift of divine liberality, and deny ourselves the use of that plant, which was made to cheer the hearts of mortals. Nay, our holy traditions themselves and all our doctors tacitly own, that the vine is allowable, and that it was saved, among the rest of the vegetables, by Noah in the ark : And that holy Prophet cursed the devil for stealing it away. Perhaps the story will not be unpleasant to thee.

When God commanded Noah, with his companions, to descend out of the ark in peace, they built them houses, and began to exercise husbandry : They sowed corn, and the seed of other vegetables : They planted also all sorts of trees : But, when they came to look for the vine, it could not be found. Then it was told Noah by the angel, that the devil had stolen it away, as having some right to it. Wherefore Noah cited the devil to appear before the angel, in the name of God, to answer his theft. The angel gave judgment, that the vine should be divided between them into three parts, whereof the devil should have two, and Noah one ; to which both parties consented : Whereby it is evident, that man has some share in the juice of the grape. For this was the decision of Gabriel, that, when two thirds of the liquor of this fruit was evaporated away in boiling over the fire, the remainder should be lawful for Noah and his posterity to drink. And thou knowest we Mussulmans generally obey this law in preparing our wine.

Let the devil therefore, in the name of God, have his share in this tempting fruit, and then there can be no injustice in enjoying our own part. For, when that which inebriates is separated by fire from the rest, this liquor becomes pure, holy, and blessed. This is the sentence of the ancients, the immediate auditors of the messenger of God, as is to be seen in the manuscripts they left behind them ; which, though they are rare and difficult to be met with, yet such as diligently seek wisdom shall not lose their labour. : Abu Becre Eben Mahumet has taken
great

great pains to collect the memoirs of antiquity. He was a learned doctor among my countrymen of the house of Sulpha (may he rest under the umbrella's of Paradise.) From him I had this relation.

But tell me, my dear Mehemet, if thou knowest, how camest thou to be the only man that had the good fortune to be sentenced to this happy disgrace? Or, if thou art ignorant, I will tell thee. For it seems the rest of the company in that night's revel were discovered as well as thou, yet escaped all censure. It looks, as if they were designedly reserved for victims to a more inexorable revenge. And the event justifies this conjecture; since, within the circuit of the moon, not only they, but all the surviving creatures of the Sultana Kiossem, were strangled.

Therefore again I pronounce thee happy and doubly blessed in being an exile, since thereby thou hast escaped the hands of the executioner, and art now living in Egypt, the most fortunate region on earth. Ascribe this to thy propitious destiny, and to the favour of Solyman Kyzlir Aga, who, foreseeing the slaughter that would be made of that old Queen's servants, took this opportunity to accuse thee to the Grand Signior, that so he might save thy life: For it was at his intercession thou wert banished into this happy province, which is called the Nurse of all Nations. Improve thy exile to the best advantage; and from this nurse suck the milk of science with which she has formerly nourished the whole earth. Be grateful also to thy deliverer; for he is a trusty friend, and unchangeable, where he once places his affection. He had a particular kindness for thee. From him I received the news of thy escape; for that is the proper name of thy banishment. Pour forth devout oraisons for his health and happiness, since thou art in a land where the prayers of Mussulmans are as effectually heard, at some particular places, as if they were uttered at the tomb of the Prophet.

I coun-

I counsel thee to visit the prison of Joseph, which is in the dungeon of the castle of Cairo. This is a place of great devotion among the faithful, and has been so in all ages, since the death of that patriarch, Moses the prophet, of whom it is said, that he died in the embraces of God, made his prayers in this place; and so did Aaron his brother, when they performed those miracles in Egypt. Jesus the son of Mary visited this place, both he and his mother (on whom are centered the smiles of the Creator :) They there performed their devotions, when they fled from the persecution of Herod. So did the prophets and apostles, as many as were in Egypt, with all true believers. Nay, some of the Infidels themselves, having heard of the renown of this sanctuary, made their addresses to Heaven there, in time of great distress. For here prayers are infallibly heard, especially if they be said after the sun has traversed the meridian; when the wicked demons are asleep, who walk abroad till noon, doing all the mischief they can.

My friend, when I think of the region where thou art, I can hardly forbear envying thee. It is a land of prodigies and miracles. It is the support of men, and the granary of the world: Those who inhabit it are full of complacency and joy; and those who abandon it burn with a perpetual desire to return. Its rivers are clear, and the waters sweet and rich as wine; the eye of God is upon it, who causes the Nile to flow at its accustomed season; whence the land is made fertile, beyond all the provinces on earth: This Nile is one of the rivers which God caused to descend from the springs of Paradise, on the wings of Gabriel; and has hid the place of its descent among the inaccessible heights of mountains.

There are many strange things related of the land of Alphiom, and how it was first manured by Joseph, being before his time but a fen or marsh. The story also of Hagar, the mother of all the Ismaelites, is not unpleasant; thou wilt find it in the chronicles of Egypt:

Egypt : For she was an Egyptian, of the family of the Coptites ; and was bestowed on Sarah, the wife of our father Ibrahim, by Charoba, the King of Egypt's daughter. After she was dismissed from her Lady, she travelled to Mecca ; from whence they sent a dispatch to the King of Egypt, to acquaint him with her affairs, and with the birth of her son Ismael, imploring his assistance, in regard she was in a land barren of all things. Then the King of Egypt caused a canal to be cut from the Nile, at the foot of the eastern mountains of Egypt, to the Red-sea ; and sent vessels laden with corn, fruits, and all manner of necessary provisions, to Hagar.

If thou addressst to the feet of the doctors, the venerable prelates of Cairo, they will soon inform thee of more strange things than these. It is a noble exercise to contemplate the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth ; to search into the wonders and prodigies ; to trace footsteps of the ancient nations, and the traditions which know no origin.

Mehemet, I am an exile as well as thou : Let us continue our former friendship in this state, and do one another all the good offices we can. As for the misfortunes of human life, let us bear them with an equal mind ; for they will soon have an end, as well as we ourselves.

May God, who in the time of Gog and Magog took up from the earth the great Alcoran and the sheets of science, the black stone, and the shrine of Moses, with the five rivers, have thee in his holy protection and custody, at the hour of evil, and at all times.

Paris, 26th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LET.

LETTER XIII.

To Kerker Hassan, Bassa.

THOU mayest report it to the Divan for a certain truth, that the Chief Mufti of the Christians is dead : Which puts all the Courts in Europe upon new strains of policy.

He was called Innocent X. after his assumption to the papacy : For his true name was Pamphilio. But some say it has been a custom with the Popes to change their names, ever since a certain priest was lifted to that dignity, which was called Bocca de Porco, or Hog's Face. He, ashamed of this ignominious name, as soon as he sat in the chair of Peter, assumed the name of Sergius. Yet all his successors have not observed that rule.

These Popes have an authority greater than our principal Mufti : For they are obeyed by Kings and Emperors ; and, being esteemed little less than Gods on earth, they are solemnly adored, on the day of their coronation, by all the Cardinals, Princes, Prelates, and foreign Ambassadors at that time in Rome. And for that end they are seated on the altar, which the Nazarenes call the Tabernacle and Habitation of their God.

If I mistake not in my observation, these Roman Caliphs aspire at a sovereignty over all Kings and Princes : They would make that which they call the Hierarchy a superlative independent monarchy, to which all the governments in the world should pay homage, and be subject.

This puts me in mind of a certain preacher at Naples, who, some years ago, when Adonai the Jew was in that city, and happened to be present in the church, having made a very elaborate speech to persuade the people that the priests were superior to Kings ; at length he broke out into this passionate exclamation : ' O ye Princes of Christendom, ye are ' Pharaohs, and we Priests are your Gods. O ye
' Pharaoh's

‘Pharaoh’s, obey your Gods. You can only command the creature, but we make the Creator himself come down on the altars, at our pleasure.’ This relation I had from the Jew, in his travels through Italy. And it is asserted by some of their doctors, ‘that the Pope has not only power to excommunicate the greatest Prince on the earth, but also to pull a saint out of Paradise, and send him to hell.’

If they could persuade the Nazarene Princes and people to believe they have such an exorbitant power, perhaps in time they may reduce them to as blind a superstition as the ancient Kings of Egypt were guilty of, who were so besotted to their priests, that when he whom they called the Cater, or master of the celestial influences, commanded the King to kill himself, for that it was the will of Heaven; the poor bigotted Monarch durst not dispute the order he had received, but in simple obedience became his own murder-er.

Those Egyptian priests indeed were masters of great science, profound astrologers, excellent mathematicians, and perfectly skilled in the secrets of natural magick. They performed things transcending the more common and obvious works of nature: By which it was easy to strike terror into the hearts of ignorant mortals. But, as for the Nazarene priests, all that they can boast of is, that they have read the histories of former times, and are able to discourse of philosophy, and other sciences, without having the power to work any prodigies: Unless thou wilt count it one to keep so many warlike nations in servile awe of their authority, with the bare pretence of turning a piece of bread into a God.

Yet, for all this, there are many poor prelates, and other ecclesiastics, who are invested with empty titles, having little or no revenues: Among which the poverty of some is so remarkable as to become a proverb. Thus it is common in the mouths of the Romans to say, ‘The Pope’s mule fares better than the Bishop of Orvieto.’

Illustrious Bassa, live thou in the faith of the Mussulmans, and the favour of the Grand Signior; for in that state thou mayest despise the greatest of these ecclesiastick Infidels,

Paris, 33th of the 1d Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER XIV.

To the Kaimacham.

I Believe the Secretary of the Nazarene affairs takes me to be a conjurer, and thinks that I can divine all the changes and alterations that happen at the Porte; or that I have some magical glass, which represents to me the continued series of remote events, with all the transactions of the Imperial court, camp, and city: Or else he would not be so late in his dispatches, and send me such imperfect news. I am forced many times to address my letters by guess; not knowing whether the person to whom I write be in the same station he was a while ago; or whether he be among the living, or the dead: Whether I should direct my dispatches to Constantinople, or to the Elysian Shades.

My intelligence of the Mussulman affairs is many times more owing to the French merchants, who trade to the Levant; or to the expresses which come from ambassadors residing at Constantinople, than to that secretary, whose care it ought to be that I should be timely informed of whatever happens in the Osman empire.

Surely Kifur Drameler has some design upon me, in being always thus tardy and negligent. I scarce hear from him once in half a year; whereas he is commanded by his superiors, as well as mine, to write to me every moon: And then he sends me such a lame account of things, such fragments and scraps of

of news, that his letters need a comment to make them intelligible.

About four years ago I modestly taxed him with this neglect, when I had reason to do it in my own vindication to Minezem Aluph, Bassa. But Kifur heard of it, and was very angry. He sent me a letter full of invectives, which I answered with a kind of indifference, mixing raillery with my juster resentments. How that worked on him I know not; but his reservedness, ever since, makes me conclude he studies revenge; and that he takes this method to accomplish it, by keeping me as much in ignorance, as he dares, of the changes and other important occurrences at the mysterious Porte. He knows it would be a crime little less than capital, not to write to me at all. Such a wilful contumacy would straight proclaim him a traitor; since, among the other instructions which were given him with his commission, this charge was none of the least, that he should send frequent intelligence to all the Grand Signior's agents, whether publick or private, in the Courts of Nazarene Princes. He is sensible, that such a manifest contempt of supreme authority would absolutely ruin him. Therefore he goes more subtly to work; for he writes, indeed, but very seldom: And then, with cunning artifices, either quite conceals, or at least disguises the most considerable transactions, only filling up his letters with trifling stories, and impertinent relations, nothing to my purpose: Thinking by this means to bring upon me the displeasure of the Grandees, through the mistakes I may commit for want of better advertisement.

Be it how it will, I am strangely at a loss sometimes what to think, or how to write to my superiors, or what sort of conduct I should use in this place, amidst so many various reports as are continually spread abroad in Europe; concerning the affairs of the Seraglio, the shining city, and other parts of the Ottoman empire: Whilst this Kifur still delays to ascertain me of any thing.

I have

I have been wholly a stranger till within these few days to the fate of the Captain Bassa, who was strangled about a year ago, for his cowardice and ill conduct against the Venetians. Neither knew I any thing of the adventure and flight of his sons. I was equally ignorant of the succession of the Bassa of Buda in this important command; and of many other changes both by sea and land.

So at present here are a thousand rumours stirring about one thing or other in the East. Some say, that Chusein Bassa is strangled, and that the Captain Bassa is made Vizir Azem in his stead. Others report, that this first Minister was only deposed from that supreme dignity, the seals being taken from him; but that, nevertheless, he still continues to be General to the Sultan's forces in Candia. A third sort affirms, that he intended to turn Christian, holding a secret correspondence with the Patriarch of Jerusalem, by whose means, and a general revolt of the Greeks, Armenians, and other Christians, under the Grand Signior's Jurisdiction, he sought to betray the Ottoman blood, and exalt himself to the empire.

I am not willing to believe that such monstrous perfidy could enter into the heart of that illustrious hero; yet know not how to contradict it for want of true advice.

It is reported also, that Signior Capello, the Venetian Bailo, or Resident at the happy Porte, has killed himself with a poniard; being driven to despair by his long confinement, and the cruel usage he had received from the Mussulmans. God knows whether it be true or no. It would be much to my satisfaction to have a particular account of all these things, and of whatsoever else occurs worthy of notice. For how can I discharge my trust, whilst I am thus kept in the dark?

They talk here of a violent plague that rages in Muscovy, and that above 200,000 people have died of it in the city of Moscow only, besides millions that have been swept away in the provinces of that

vast empire. Those that really know not themselves, nor are acquainted with their own nature will yet pretend to penetrate into the counsels of the Omnipotent, and pronounce this as a judgment on the Muscovites, for the cruelties they have committed in Poland. Doubtless the methods of fate are inscrutable.

In the mean while, we are plagued here with a crew of vagabonds, whom they call Gypsies, or Egyptians: For they pretend to be descended from that place. They swarm up and down the country like caterpillars, devouring the fruits of the earth. They boast of a profound skill in palmistry, physiognomy, and other sciences, cheating people of their money, under the notion of telling them their fortunes. Nobody knows from whence they come, or whither they go; for they are as uncertain as the wind; a nasty generation, and the very burden of the land. If any creatures be obliged to them, it is the mice and rats, with whom they seem to be in league: For they kill and eat all the cats they seize on.

Illustrious Minister, I pray Heaven to defend thee from all sorts of plagues and vermin, but especially from monsters in human shape.

Paris, 26th of the 2d Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER XV.

To the same.

AS I am alive, these Gypsies have enchanted me: I cannot put them out of my mind. And, perhaps, it will be neither impertinent nor troublesome to give thee a farther informatoin concerning them.

There

There are several opinions concerning the original of these vagrants, and they have been thought worthy to be inserted into histories. Some say they came out of Tartary or Scythia, and that they first appeared in these parts about the year 1417 of the Christians Hegira. At which time they entered into Saxony in troops, having the passport of Sigismond, King of Hungaria, and the son of Charles IV. They had also the recommendation of divers other Princes, who looked upon them as holy persons, or prophets. For they pretended that they were commanded by God to travel over the whole earth, and not to have either houses or lands in their own possession: And that this was enjoined them as a penance to expiate the sins of their ancestors; who, inhabiting Egypt in the days of Jesus the son of Mary, the Christian Messias, refused to entertain that holy Prophet and his mother, when they fled from the persecution of Herod.

Others are of opinion, that they came first out of Persia, and are of the race of those who adore the fire: Being forced, once in seven years, to make decimations of their people, and send away many caravans to seek their fortune in foreign countries, Persia not being able to sustain their numerous progeny.

A third sort affirms, that they are the posterity of the ten Jewish tribes that were carried away captives by Salmanassar, King of Assyria. Nobody knows for certain what they are, or from whence. They are of swarthy complexions, wrapt up in mantles of cotton or wool. They speak seven languages; profess three sciences; obey one King or General, who always travels with them. The Indians call them Cingari, from the word in their language which signifies a kind of water-fowl that hath no certain nest, but is forced every night to seek a new lodging: For so these Gypsies rove from place to place. The Germans call them Zingener, from the word Zindel, which is the constant appellative of the King of these rambles, as Pharaoh was of old

among the Egyptians, and ~~Casals~~ among the Romans. In many things they resemble the ~~Forlains~~ and Faquirs of the East; boasting of extraordinary illuminations, and a constant familiarity with God: Though some learned men, among the Nazarenes, esteem them no better than a crew of cheats and hypocrites: Even as they do these Oriental Santons, who, they say, under the mask of an uncommon holiness, commit a thousand villainies.

God best knows what judgment is to be made either of the one or the other. But these Egyptians, as they call them, whether they are really such or no, have no great marks of sanctity, in that they are very unclean. They seldom or never wash themselves, but, like the swine, wallow in all manner of filthiness, eating prohibited meats, and having their women in common, which are the two sources of all impurity.

As to the Faquirs of the East, they are strict observers of the law of abstinence and cleanness; whether they be Mussulmans, or the Gentiles of India: And, if in other matters they may be found faulty, it is very rare: And then they exceed not the character of humanity, which, thou knowest, is by nature prone to error, and subject to a thousand frailties and oversights. We are all men, and God does not expect our conduct to be that of angels. His repose is in himself, and, if he takes any complacency in the things of the world, it is in beholding every thing according to its nature. The exquisite form and symmetry of a bee, a spider, or a pismire, with the inimitable architecture of the two former, and the admirable providence of the latter, may, for aught we know, afford him as much delight as the most celebrated beauty, strength, science, and performances of men. For his power and wisdom are equally manifest in all things. Every creature is perfect in its kind, only a wicked man is a blot in the universe.

Wouldest thou know what the Western Nazarenes are most busy about at this time? It is the election

election of a new Pope. He is to be chosen by the College of Cardinals, who are Princes of the Roman Church. They are all shut up in a place which they call the Conclave. This is a certain gallery in the palace of the Vatican at Rome, where every Cardinal has his cell, or apartment, by himself, having only two servants to attend him. The Conclave is surrounded by the Roman militia, to prevent all intercourse by letters or other ways, between those without and those within. The very dishes which are served up at the tables of the Cardinals are narrowly searched, lest any letters should be conveyed in them. The last posts from Rome assure us, that there were no less than sixty-six Cardinals thus shut up when they left that city. And there they must remain night and day, without taking the fresh air, or seeing any body, till they have agreed on their election. There are two physicians, a surgeon, and an apothecary shut up with them to serve them in case of sickness.

One of the Conclave is the Cardinal de Retz, who escaped out of his prison in this kingdom, and fled to Rome for protection. From whence he sent a letter to the Archbishops and other Prelates of France; which, being pronounced a seditious libel against the King and the Government, was, in the end of the last moon, burnt publickly, by the King's order, and all copies of it prohibited.

The King has also sent private instructions to the Cardinals of his party at Rome, to keep a strict watch on the conduct of de Retz, and to oppose him in all things.

Here is nothing but caballing and intrigue among these Infidels. They are good at stratagem, and know better how to undermine one another, than to face their enemies in the open field: Which is a character more suitable to women than men. Whereas, thou knowest, our heroes in the East know no other way to honour, victory, and empire, than by downright bravery and resolution, subduing all things by the force of their arms. But God,

when he divided the nations of the earth, and separated the sons of Noah, assigned to every one a different constellation, according to whose influence the genius of each people is disposed. They all obey the dictates of their particular stars, and the orders of eternal destiny,

Therefore, sage Minister, since Mars is the planet of the sons of Imael, and the ascendant of the Ottoman empire, there is no need that we should turn apostates from the star of our better fortune, to court the glances of Mercury, who is only the guardian of knaves and cheats.

Paris, 26th of the 1d Moon,
of the Year 1655.

The End of the First Book.

LET-

L E T T E R S

WRIT BY

A SPY AT PARIS.

B O O K II.

L E T T E R I.

To Cara Hali, Phyfician to the Grand Signior.

FOrmerly I could have writ to thee with as much freedom as I could to Egri Boinou, (on whom rest the favours of God) or as I can now to Dgnet Oglou, to my brother Pesteli Hali, or to any of my familiar friends. But when I consider the eminent station thou possessest, in that the health and life of the mighty Emperor is now committed to thy skill and care, I am many times at a stand how to address myself. Methinks thou art tinctured with the majesty of that personage, whose hand thou so often hast the honour to touch, when required to discover, by the beating of his pulse, the interior maladies which afflict his royal soul. Yet I know thou still retainest thy humanity, and will not despise those whom thou hast once thought worthy of friendship.

Suffer me then to converse with a philosophick

freedom, that is, an address void of formalities and reserves.

I know it is of no import, whether Mahmut be sick or well, provided the Grand Signior be served. What signify the languishing pains or more acute agonies of a slave, so long as he is able to carry on his master's interest? We are not born for ourselves only, but, by the very condition of our nature, are obliged to consecrate our lives to the service of others. It's a reciprocal debt, from which no mortal is free. Every man owes something to his relations, more to his friends, but most of all to the publick.

Therefore I make no complaints of my lot, nor murmur at the will of destiny. I accuse not the stars of my nativity, nor tax them with unkindly aspects : But am contented with my fortune, be it good or bad, and resigned to the pleasure of Heaven.

As nature hath framed my body infirm and weak, subject to a thousand maladies ; so is my mind also harrassed with distempers which have no number. But above all I labour under a kind of intellectual fever, a perpetual thirst of knowledge, which all the books and converse in the world cannot satisfy. There is no end of my doubts and scruples. Every thing appears to me as ambiguous as the answers of the Delphick oracle : Nay, I am a perfect riddle to myself.

Tell me, dear Hali, how I should cure this dropsy of the mind, and I will not trouble thee with the inconsiderable diseases of my body. I have a high opinion of you physicians : And shall put more confidence in thy advice than in the Softa of the Musti. Conceal not thy art from Mahmut, who admires thee with a respect equal to that which he pays to the memoirs of Avicen, Al' Raza, Helal, and the rest of those excellent physicians, mentioned in our Arabian histories.

And, now these ornaments of our nation are come into my mind, permit them to divert me from saying or thinking any more of myself at present : For it
will

will be better to turn the discourse to such illustrious themes. At worst, it will be but an innocent digression.

In perusing the lines of those famous men, I meet with some passages which are very delightful. Perhaps, thou hast seen the same. Yet it will do thee no hurt to call them again to thy remembrance.

I have read in a certain manuscript, penned by Ibrahim the son of Helah, a renowned physician at Bagdat, this memoir of his father. 'On a certain day, 'says he, that my father had administered physick 'to the Emperor Tuzan, for which he was presented with a royal vest, rewarded with five thousand piastres, and by the Emperor's command was 'carried through the streets in state, I observed that 'he was pensive amidst all those honours, and troubled in mind, when I thought he had great reason 'to rejoice: Therefore I said to him, "My father, how comes it to pass, that you are thus dejected at a time when all the world expects to see you dissolved in pleasure? He answered, Son, he that has bestowed these honours on me is a fool, and does things preposterously, without reason; and therefore I cannot rejoice at these untimely favours he has shewed me, being sensible they are not the effects of his judgment, but of his ignorance. I gave him a cathartick potion, which worked so strongly with him, that it excoriated his bowels, and brought forth blood: So that I was forced to use a different method, both to remove his distemper, and stop the violent flux. In the mean while, he, ignorantly believing that the voiding of so much blood procured him the present ease and health he feels, therefore ordered these honours to be done me which thou seest. Now that which saddens me is my fear lest, some time or other, he may through his ignorance commit as great an error on the contrary side, and suspect that I have done him an injury, when there is no ground for it, and so put me to death."

Tell me, my friend, had not this physician reason for his behaviour and words? He was a man of great abilities, and accomplished with divers sciences, and in high esteem with the Princes and Nobles of Arabia.

It were worthy thy pains to peruse frequently the life of Avicen, written by himself, wherein thou wilt behold the methods he used to acquire a profound skill in the sciences: How he was at first puzzled in the metaphysics, and was almost driven to despair, till a dream unfolded to him whatsoever was difficult. When he was at a loss in any disquisition, he used to frequent the mosques, and pour forth devout and frequent oraisons to the source of intellectual light, till the thing was manifested to him. He sat up late at nights, having a lamp perpetually burning in his chamber, applying himself attentively to books and contemplation. This was his course, till he was consummate in all the liberal sciences, which was in the eighteenth year of his age.

But, of all the physicians whose names adorn our history, none seems comparable to Thabet Eb'n Abraham, for his skill in exactly indicating the causes of a distemper, by the different measures of the pulse. Abul Pharai, his contemporary and friend, writes thus of him: 'On a certain day, says he, when I was with Thabet Eb'n Abraham of Harrain, in the house of Abu Mohammed the Visir, Abu Adalla Ebno'l Hejai the poet, being there also, reached forth his hand to Thabet, desiring him to feel his pulse. To whom the physician forthwith replied, "Thou hast used a gross diet, and been intemperate in eating sour milk with veal." The other answering, that it was true, and all the company admiring; Abu'l Abbas the astrologer also reached forth his hand. But when Thabet had felt his pulse, "Thou, said he, hast committed an excess in taking too much of cold things; for, as I judge, thou hast eaten about eleven pomegranates." Immediately Abu'l Abbas cried out, "This

"This is a prophet certainly, and more than a physician, for he speaks the truth to a tittle." "Every body was astonished at his wonderful knowledge, and I more than all the rest. Wherefore when I had him alone, I said," "My dear Thabet, the study of physick is common to us both ; therefore hide nothing from me, but discover freely by what art you were able to tell that the poet eat four milk with veal, and not with beef or mutton ; and that the astrologer eat no more nor less than eleven pomegranates." "He answered, "My mind suggested this to me, and prompted my tongue to utter it." "Then I desired him to shew me the scheme of his nativity : Which he did at his own house. And, considering it attentively, I observed, that the planet Jupiter was Lord of the horoscope. Then said I to him," "It is this speaks, my dear friend, not you, so often as you make these fortunate conjectures." Thus far Abu'l Pharai.

God knows whether the stars have any such influence on men in their birth, or no. I am not very credulous in this point. Nor can the authority of the ancients, or the character of the Persian and Chaldean Magi, captivate my mind in an implicit faith of things so liable to doubt. Who knows what the stars are made of, or for what ends they are created ? Yet I must own, that some men seem to be born with inherent faculties, which others can never acquire with all the art and industry in the world. One man is of a poetick constitution ; another is genially inclined to physick ; a third excels in mechanicks : Every man has his peculiar gift. And yet, perhaps, all this while, the stars have nothing to do in the matter. However, if there be any truth in astrology, the Persians, Chaldeans, Arabians, and Indians, seem to be the only men, of all nations, constellated to understand this science perfectly. One knows not what to think, amidst so many appearances of truth and falsehood. Nor can our thoughts be of any great import, be it how it will in these speculative matters. At the

day of judgment, we shall not be asked, what proficiency we have made in logick, metaphysicks, astronomy, or any other science; but whether we have lived according to our nature, as men endued with morality and reason. In that hour it will more avail us, that we have thrown a handful of flower in charity to a nest of contemptible pismires, than that we could muster all the hosts of heaven, and call every star by its proper name. For then the constellations themselves shall disappear; the sun and moon shall give no more light, and all the frame of nature shall vanish: But our good and bad works shall remain for ever, recorded in the archives of eternity.

If from this manner of writing thou shalt conjecture I am melancholy, and wilt also, reveal the causes and remedy of this distemper, thou shalt be to me more than a thousand Avicens, Helals, Thabets, or all the physicians and astrologers of the East. For these kind of thoughts are mournful as the shadow of death.

Paris, 23d of the 4th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER II.

To Afis, Bassa.

I know not whether thou wilt praise or condemn the sentence, which the Elector of Saxony pronounced not long ago on a poor fellow for killing a deer. Yet, because there is something very singular in it, I will relate the whole passage, as I received it from Nathan Ben Saddi, the Jew, at Vienna:

In the moon of Chouval, a certain citizen at Wirtemberg was accused before the Elector, for hunting in his forest, and killing one of his deer. The Duke in a rage commanded him to be set upon a stag, his hands chained to the horns, and his feet under
the

the belly of the beast; ordering that the stag with this burthen should be let loose, to run whither he would. The poor frightened stag, not being accustomed in such a load, and terrified with the rattling of the chains, ran away full speed over hills and dales, through thickets of briars and thorns, never stopping till he had measured above three and thirty German leagues; and then, tired with so vast a race, he fell down. At which instant a caravan was coming by that place out of Silesia.

The poor wretch on the back of the stag, almost dead with the pains he had undergone, in so continued and violent a motion, being also sorely bruised and his flesh torn and mangled by the boughs of trees, as the stag rushed through thick woods, cried aloud to the caravan, begging that some of them would in mercy dispatch him out of his torments. But they, either for fear of the Duke's displeasure, or for other reasons, refused him this kindness. So that after the stag had rested a while, and recovered new spirits, he began a fresh career; and never ceased running till he arrived at a certain monastery or convent of religious, where he beat against the gate with his horns, till some of the dervises opened it, and let him in. They, astonished to see a man thus pinioned to a stag, his face, arms, legs, and all his body covered with blood, and himself ready to expire, immediately brought him cordials and other refreshments, whilst some were employed in loosing his chains. But, being informed by his own mouth how he came into this condition, they began to think of turning him loose again, for fear of the Duke's anger. However suffering themselves to be overcome by the importunity of the miserable man, and relying on their ecclesiastick privileges, (for here in the West the convents are generally allowed sanctuaries for all sorts of offenders) they took him into their protection: But he expired that night.

It is hard to determine, whether the Duke, or these dervises, were in the right or wrong: The French, who

who of late have by a fashion learned to grow obdurate, justify the proceedings of this Prince; saying, That pity is a passion fit only for women, children, and fools. They esteem it a mark of a great spirit, a man capable of empire, not to be moved with the sighs or tears of the miserable; but to frown or laugh at the misfortunes of others. This, they say, is the only method to harden men for war, conquest, and plunder; where the victors are to cut the way to honour and riches through the hearts of the vanquished, to quench the ardent thirst of glory with human blood, and to celebrate their triumphs only in the midst of horrid massacres and funerals.

It is true, these principles and actions are allowable in men of the sword, when they fight the battles of their King and country in heat of blood. But clemency and compassion are virtues becoming the greatest Prince, or most valiant General, when their enemies are reduced, by the fortune of war, to kiss the dust of their feet, and beg for mercy: Or, when, in time of peace, their subjects fall into a crime which may admit indulgence. Certainly these Western Infidels have wrong notions of humanity, in asserting, that cruelty is either a sign of a noble nature, or a step to true happiness: Since the most hard-hearted tyrant, one time or other, will have need of compassion himself: Especially in sickness and the agonies of death, which, perhaps prove more tormenting to him, than to the merciful and generous. It is recorded of Al Hejai Eb'n Hesham, a famous Arabian Captain, that, when in a malignant fever, he called for water to drink, and it was denied him by the physicians, who had the care of his health: 'It is enough (said he) Rueno'ddaula, once my Lieutenant, to whom I forgave three treasons, and who died a natural death, has refreshed me at this minute with a liquor unknown: Sure it is the wine of Paradise.' And from that moment he began to recover his health, after which he lived many years, often rehearsing this passage among his familiar friends, to his last day.

But

But the Infidels are either ignorant of these examples, or, if they know them, pride will not suffer them to learn morality and justice. They are destined, the greatest part, to be incredulous to the day of judgment. How many Prophets has God sent into all nations, to teach them the right way, and not the way of such with whom he is displeased! Yet they will not be converted: They look on the Apostles and Messengers of the Eternal, with the eyes of swine; they grunt under the burden of their sensuality, and, like those filthy animals, return to their mire again. Yet that superlatively Merciful winks at their frailties, and visits them with his graces every morning. But they put their fingers in their ears, and turn away in disdain, as from a beggar. They reject the King of all things, as a fugitive and vagabond upon earth.

From that delectable Essence, the odour of whose sweetness is diffused through the elements, and refreshes the minds of the true Faithful, let us, by continual devotion and virtue, attract divine tinctures, till our hearts be all transformed into incense, and in this aromack pile our souls expire like the phoenix, to revive again in the joys of Paradise, in amours which know no end.

Paris, 8th of the 5th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER III.

To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna.

I Wonder at nothing, much less at the extravagant caprices of Tyrants. Methinks there appears no novelty in modern transactions: They are but a repetition of ancient practices under new forms. Of all the events of this age, not one has come to my knowledge which gives me a surprise.
Yet,

Yet I must confess there is something very singular in the punishment the Duke of Saxony inflicted, as thy letter tells me, on the poor deer-stealer. And if it be just to put a man to death on such an account, as the Indians hold, the Duke seems very ingenious and accurate in the choice he made of an executioner.

The ancient Romans had a law which they called *Lex Talionis*; which in all criminal cases appointed the punishment to be in the same circumstances adequate to the fault. And thou knowest Moses, your Law-giver, left much the same statutes: Requiring the loss of the eye of him who had put another man's out; a tooth for a tooth, an arm for an arm, and so proportionably of other injuries. But this Prince seems to have made a supplement, where these laws appeared short; and has shewed a most exquisite niceness of revenge in the destiny of the unfortunate huntsman, to cause a stag to be, in so peculiar a manner, the instrument of his death, who had villainously murdered one of the same species: Doubtless it was a princely freak of justice: And, had it been done purely to avenge the blood of the slaughtered beast, and not in vindication of his own right, I could not forbear to pronounce it a frolick worthy of a hero. But he himself is frequently guilty of the same kind of murder, as are most of the Great Men in Europe; whose tables are no other than the altars of gluttony, smoking with flesh and blood, whilst hecatombs of animals are there sacrificed to voracious appetites, the idols of these Western People.

Methinks, therefore, it had been more generous and becoming a Prince to pardon the poor fellow a theft, which, perhaps, was the only method he had to preserve himself and his family from starving: And, for aught I know, he had as much right, according to the law of nature, to kill a stag, as the owner has. But there is no talk to be made of right or wrong, where power overrules all.

India

India is at present the only publick theatre of justice towards all living creatures. There it is a capital crime to shed the blood of any animal, and punished with death no less than the murder of a man. The Princes and Nobles, indeed, inclose deer and other innocent creatures in parks, not with a design to prey upon them at pleasure, but to defend them from the violence of others; whilst those happy animals range and feed where they please, within those pales, free from peril, and never fearing any other death, save what they pay to nature, when they have spun out the accustomed term of their life. They also build hospitals for a like purpose; and are at a great charge every year to redeem a certain number of oxen and cows from slaughter: For they esteem it a barbarous and inhuman cruelty to murder those creatures, which are the nurses of our life.

The law of Moses, if I mistake not, obliges all of thy nation to certain specifick tendernesses towards the dumb animals. And Eesa, the Prophet, a man of no obscure extract, but of a noted race among the Hebrews, says, 'He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; and he that sacrificeth a lamb as if he beheaded a dog.' And in another place the same Prophet says, in the person of God, 'To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? I am offended with the smoke of your burnt-offerings, and nauseated with the smell of broiled fat. I take no delight in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats. Who hath required these things at your hands? Bring no more vain oblations, which my soul hateth.'

By those expressions, one would think the Prophet brings in God, denying that ever he commanded any such sacrifice, or shedding of blood, and protesting against it as an abomination. Where then is the reputation of these writings which go under the name of Moses? For in them these bloody victims are expressly enjoined; God cannot be contradictory to himself. Doubtless, a great part of the
true

true law which God gave to Moses was lost in the former captivities of your nation, when your cities and provinces were quite dispeopled, your fathers led away by the victorious Monarchs of the East, and your choicest Memoirs abolished. So that what remains now is only a collection of fragments patched up by Esdras, and other industrious Scribes, to which they gave the specious title of the Law of Moses, that so they might fasten the wavering people in obedience to something, though of their own devising.

Nathan, I do not go about to seduce thee; examine all things. Believe neither me nor thy own Rabbies, but trust only thy reason, which will stand by thee at the day of judgment, when all things else shall fail.

Paris, 8th of the 5th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER IV.

To Dgebe Nafir, Bassa.

THESE Nazarenes, like the followers of the Prophet, are divided into innumerable sects; and so it is in all religions; men cannot think alike; nature itself delights in variety. God has diversified the faculties of our souls, as he has the constitutions of our bodies. The zealot is subject to cholera, the bigot to melancholy, the libertine is of a sanguine complexion; and, as for the rest, they are but so many walking, speaking lumps of phlegm. This is the physical division of mortals; under which are comprehended the various tempers which result from the different mixture of these four radical principles. And for this we must thank Galen and Hippocrates,

But,

But, if we consult the Astrologers, they will assign as many different humours and complexions as there be stars in the heavens, at least, as there be constellations. They'll tell you of the Bull and the Bear, and God knows what heavenly stories. The Dragon shall spit venom on one man's nativity, out of his mouth; and give another a poisonous lick with his tail. If we believe all they say, there is not an herb in the field but has its particular star, whose influence causes it to grow and prosper; though Moses tells us, that the vegetables appeared on the earth, even before the stars themselves had their existence in the heavens.

But, whether there be any truth in Astrology, or no, this is certain, that men differ in their sentiments of religion, as they do in their faces. The physiognomy of faith is infinitely various. One man believes in Moses, another in Jesus the son of Mary, a third in Mahomet our holy Law-giver. Then these are subdivided into innumerable parties. The Jews have seventy eminent religious factions. There are numbered seventy and one sects of Christians, and seventy and two of Mussulmans. These are all at odds about words and exterior ceremonies; so zealous for charity and peace, that they are in perpetual wars for its sake, murdering one another in the love of God: And such stout champions for the truth, that they scruple not to tell ten thousand lies in its defence.

The differences between the Greek and Armenian Nazarenes, the Nestorians and Jacobites, with other sects of the East, are not unknown to the Ministers of the Porte. But, perhaps, thou art a stranger to the new schisms of the West.

The most eminent division of Christendom, at this time, is into Catholics and Protestants. The former obey the Roman Musti, and boast of an uninterrupted series of Caliphs, from Peter, the Vicar of the Messias, down to the present Pope. The latter are the followers of Luther and Calvin, men who pretended to certain new lights, and claimed a
right

right to reform the errors of their fathers in matters of faith and worship. God best knows who is in the right or wrong of these two parties : But they have always been at daggers-drawing in defence of their several tenets ; prosecuting and massacring one another for conscience-sake. Both sides appeal to the written law, to apostolical traditions, to the testimony of the ancients, the decrees of councils, and the practice of those whom they call the primitive church. Yet neither part will allow the other a sufficient judgment to interpret these memoirs of antiquity, nor an authentick power to decide controversies of this nature. Thus their disputes are like to last till the final day of decision, when all human quarrels shall be determined before the Grand Tribunal.

In the mean time, they take all advantages to execute their spite and malice on each other, under the notion of justice and piety. We are daily alarmed here with tragical relations of horrid murders and butcheries committed on the Protestants of Piedmont and other parts under the Duke of Savoy. Whilst some say, that all these reports are false, and the sufferings of those people are, according to law, the due punishment of their rebellious actions.

It is not in my power to adjust their differences ; nor is it material to a Mussulman, which of them has the law on their side. Yet, if I were inclined to take any part, it should be that of the oppressed. Cruelty I abhor ; and our holy Prophet has forbid force to be used in matters of religion, since the conscience is responsible to none but God.

May that God, from whose unity have sprung all the different essences in the world, and all the variety in nature, give us grace to love the whole creation, and not to shed blood, unless in the sacred combat.

Paris, 13th of the 6th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

L E T-

LETTER V.

To William Vospet, a Recluse of Austria.

I Had concluded thee dead, till thy letter certified me to the contrary. So long a silence between friends would put any man upon the same thoughts. Ten years have slipped away between my last to thee and thy answer. I hope thou dost not measure time after the rate of the Seven Sleepers. Perhaps thou hast been enjoined a ten years silence, and abstinence from all manner of conversation by the Superior of thy convent. Such severities are not uncommon in religious societies, where the main business is to acquire perfection. The Armenian monasteries are much more rigid, where, but for one extravagant word, I have known a man's tongue locked up for the space of two and twenty years, under pain of excommunication; and then released; only for the sake of a most significant jest put upon the Patriarch in mute signs. Wit will find a way to vent itself, though it be at the fingers ends. And, for aught I know, thou hast obliged the Abbot to take off thy censure by the like method. There was abundance of satire in the subsannation of the ancient Romans; and no less rhetorick in the shrug and grimace of the modern Italians. The mimicks of Scaramouch are a perfect lampoon, and Harlequin is burlesque all over.

Thou knowest I always entertain thee with one frivolous discourse or other, to divert thy melancholy; and thy own letters give me encouragement. They seem to be writ in a pleasant humour. But, tell me, Have I guessed right at the cause of so tedious a reservedness or no? Hast thou been forced all this while to speak with thy hand, feet, nose, and the emphatic motion of thy head and eye? If it were so, I fancy thou wert excellent company among thy grave, phlegmatick brethren, and in a fair way to

to understand the language of the beasts, who, by curvetting, creeping, leaping, frisking their tails, and other postures, express their various passions, desires, and necessities, as intelligibly to those who are used to them, as we can do by the most elegant addresses in words.

But to be serious : If, for the sake of virtue, this penance be imposed on thee by him who presides over thy convent, or thou hast voluntarily undertaken so difficult a part of self-denial on the score of philosophy or religion, thou hast approved thyself wise and brave in not flinching. A coward in religious matters is as despicable as in the engagements of the world. It is honourable to face temptations, and come off with victory.

As for what thou desirest to know, concerning the sepulchre of King Childeric, it is esteemed a piece of great antiquity, in regard he was the fourth Monarch of France. He reigned over the Gauls or Franks in the year 458, Severus being Emperor of Rome, Severinus and Degalaiphus, Consuls. Yet, in little more than three years, he was deposed and banished by his subjects, whilst Ægidius, a Roman, was crowned in his stead. Neither did this man please the people so well, but that, after some experience of his profusion, avarice, and other vices, they expelled him also, and recalled their lawful Sovereign. For Ægidius had vexed them with unreasonable taxes, fleecing them of many millions, which he privately sent out of the kingdom, disposing of this vast treasure at Rome, and among his friends in other parts, as a support against future contingencies : For he looked for some back-blows of fate. Childeric, therefore, being restored to his crown, enjoyed it till his death, which was in the year 484. After whom succeeded in the kingdom Clodovæus the Great, who was the first French King that embraced Christianity.

The time when Childeric's tomb was first discovered was about two years ago, when the cathedral of Tournay wanted reparation. For, as the labourers

bourers were digging up the old charnel-house, they encountered a long stone, which, giving them some fatigue, they broke in pieces, and found under it the intire skeleton of a man, lying at length, with abundance of Greek medals of gold, and some other curiosities of the same metal, among which was a ring with this motto :

SIGILLUM CHILDERICI REGIS.

All these relicks were at first possessed by the Canons of that church where they were found : Of whom they were begged by the Arch-duke of Austria, who has them in his custody. Therefore those who told thee they are in the King of France's hands were misinformed themselves, or designed to abuse thee. For this cannot be supposed, during the present war between France and Spain : When they are more ready on both sides to plunder one another, than to grant civilities of this obliging nature.

I perceive thou art grown a great Antiquary; and, therefore, in token of my esteem, I have sent thee a cabinet of such old things as I have scraped together in my travels, and during my residence in this city.

The agates, which you will find in the uppermost drawer, may be easily dated by their figures, which are all after the fashion of Gentile Rome. As for the shells in the second, I leave them to thy own judgment; only this I will say, that they are not common. The third contains a miscellany of antiques. The knives were used by the ancient Roman Priests in their sacrifices. The weights are at least twelve hundred years old, by the parallels which I have seen in the King's library. The rings are also of the Parthian make : And the arrow to which they are fastened retains its oriental venom to this hour; as thou wilt find by trying it on any animal that deserves it. But, after all, the lowermost drawer contains nothing but counterfeits. For those medals are the work of Parmezan, the finest engraver in the world. If thou knowest not his character, I
will

will tell thee in a word, he was famous for imitating so exactly the most ancient medals, that the transcripts could not be discerned by the most skilful artists from the original.

Accept these with the same good-will as I did when they were presented to me, and tell me where-in else I can gratify thy wishes.

You monasticks are infinitely happy in the advantages of retirement and tranquillity. You are free from the cares which molest other mortals. The bell rings you to prayers and to your repast. You have nothing else to regard but your contemplations and studies. Many great lights have sprung from your various orders. And I tell thee, Father William, the world will be disappointed, if thou shouldest prove a dark lanthorn, and only be wise for thyself.

Paris, 25th of the 6th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER VI.

To the most Illustrious and Invincible Vizir
Azem, at the Porte.

BY the sound which the sun makes at his going down, I swear I was not mistaken in the idea I had of thy generosity: And the dispatch with which thou hast honoured the slave Mahmut confirms me in a perfect security of thy favour and protection.

I shall, with exquisite diligence, obey thy orders: But it cannot be attempted without vast sums of money. And, if I may be thought worthy to give advice to my superiors, the most effectual way to accomplish this will be by sending one of the principal Ministers to this Court, with a splendid embassy: For this young King expects very honourable addresses from all who seek his more intimate friendship: Therefore a Chiaus would be slighted on such

an occasion, and marr all the design. I would counsel, that somebody be sent, who perfectly understands the genius of the French, and the particular aim of Cardinal Mazarine.

Under the protection of such a one, I should be able, without hazard of a discovery, to act all that is necessary to carry on this design with good success. Here are abundance of needy Courtiers, on whom gold will have a powerful influence. But neither I in person, nor any one whom I shall depute, can make such tenders, unless there were here some known publick Ambassador from the Grand Signior, to countenance the business. For otherwise it will be presently whispered, that some private agent lurks here incognito. They will start a thousand chimera's of jealousy, and so I may run the hazard of a second imprisonment, when the Cardinal shall call to mind the occasion of my first. All that I can then say of my being a Moldavian will find no credit; and it will be no less than a miracle, if they do not expose me to a scrutiny for the mark of circumcision, which, if it be found, all is betrayed and ruined.

I do not value the punishments they will inflict on me, nor the loss of my life: But I dread the more important consequences of such a discovery; the unmasking the secrets of the Grand Signior to Infidels.

These are the chief reasons I have to offer in behalf of an honourable embassy. As to the person whom thou shalt think fit to employ in so glorious a trust, I will not presume to add any thing to what I have said already, that he be a man of experience in the French affairs, well versed in the knowledge of Christian policy, the different interests of the Courts of Europe, and one that exactly knows what advantage to make of the new Pope. For, after long debates, the Cardinals have, at last, elected one, who has assumed the name of Alexander VII.

It is hard to judge, at his first accession to that sovereign chair, what interest this Prelate will em-

brace, whether that of France or Spain; or, whether his conduct will be neutral, deporting himself with an equal indifference to all the Nazarene Princes, whom he calls his sons, endeavouring to compose their quarrels, and unite their forces against the Mussulmans. I tell thee nobody can be yet assured what the temper of the Roman Mufti may prove: For it is usual for the aspiring Cardinals to promise many things, in hopes of the Papacy, which they never perform when they have once obtained the uncontrollable command. Diffimulation is ranked among the principal virtues in the Court of Rome: And he that knows not how to disguise his affections is not thought worthy of any important trust. Adonai, the Jew, has lost his liberty in that city, for being defective in his courtly accomplishments. It seems he, and some others of his nation, railed too passionately and openly at the idolatry of the Romans. Yet I expect daily to hear of his relief, for I understand, by a letter from him, that he was excepted out of the number of those whose condemnation is irrecoverable.

I reprov'd him for his immorality, in reflecting on the established religion of the country where he resides. But this kind of arrogance is the peculiar vice of the Hebrews. They despise all other people in the world: Whereas, thou knowest, the impartial God respects not one nation more than another; for they are all equally the works of his hands: And, for aught we know, he tolerates the variety of religions that are extant in the world, with the same indifference as he dispenses his common blessings to such an infinite number of men of diverse faces.

The multiplicity in the universe exalts the divine unity, which is the root of all. And, if there be ten thousand myriads of worlds, they all sprang from one cause, and there they end. For he is the first and the last of every thing.

Paris, 2d of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LET-

LETTER VII.

To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna.

THE Egyptians have a proverb, that he who thinks and speaks of God, only when he is melancholy, sacrifices to the planet Pharovis or Saturn, and not to the most high and exalted King of all things, who is the fountain of joy to men and angels.

I counsel thee not to list thyself in the number of those who adore the stars, by cherishing sad ideas of the ever indulgent and merciful Divinity: nor think thyself the less liable to their censure, because it proceeds from a nation which was once at enmity with the sons of Jacob. Despise not the wisdom of that people, from whom even Moses, your Law-giver, learned all his, and from whom all nations borrowed improvements of learning, if they are not indebted to them for its first rudiments.

By what I have said, thou wilt perceive that I consult thy happiness, and would have thee chace away vain fears and superstitious thoughts; the mere product of an ill-tempered spleen, which is the peculiar malady of thy nation. Let thy heart be always chearful, for God loves every thing that he has made: The universe overflows with his bounty. Be not too religious, nor strain the faculties he has given thee for thy support, and not for thy bane.

I had rather hear from thee matter of news than these dismal scruples about thy soul. If thou art not willing to embrace the Mussulman faith, in God's name continue to observe the law of Moses, and prosecute thy affairs with alacrity.

Thou hast been very slack of late in sending me advice of what passes at Vienna, and other parts of Germany. We have flying reports here of the death of Eleanor the Empress; and that, on the same day whereon she died, Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, the Emperor's son, was elected King of the Romans. I

know not how to write to the Ministers of the **Porte**, till thou hast ascertained me of these things. For God's sake be speedy in thy dispatches, and inform me what is done at the Diet of Frankfort. Rouse up thyself, and banish superfluous care. Remember that, as there is but one God, so there is but one law, but one thing necessary to men, that is, 'to live according to reason.' This is engraven on every man's heart, and there needs no comment to explain it. Thou art a sufficient Lawgiver, Rabbi, Doctor, and Interpreter to thyself. Let not others amuse thee with fables.

I will now acquaint thee with something of certainty. The French have gained Landrecis, a strong town in Flanders. It was surrendered to them on the 22d of this moon; and the next day all the garrison marched out, consisting of 1500 men, besides 300 wounded.

The King is gone, upon this good news, to view and take care of his new conquests. For this is not the only town the Spaniards have lost: They talk of Maubeuge, Bovines, and Conde; all which, according to fresh reports, are in the hands of the French. This young Monarch is strangely fortunate.

If thou canst inform me of such successful campaigns among the people of the North, fail not to do it in season; for we are not placed in these stations to whistle to sheep.

Paris, 29th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

To Mustapha Lulu Beamtulla, a Man of the Law.

I Would willingly be admitted into Paradise, as well as other Mussulmans. Neither would I think, speak, or do any thing, which might prejudice my title and baulk my pretensions to eternal happiness. This desire is natural to all men; and, when I profess, thou mayest believe me without an oath. Yet, methinks, I would not be hoodwinked to heaven, but would fain enjoy the benefit of my sense and reason, in my advances to that region of bliss.

I believe the Alcoran is the oracle of God; and it is so firmly imprinted in my memory, that I could repeat it verbatim from the beginning to the end, without missing a versicle. I give an intire credence to the doctrine of the resurrection, being naturally desirous of immortality: But I cannot entertain the gross conceit, which the greatest part of Mussulmans have of the resurrection, that is, that our very dust shall be raised again, and organised into a body. The Nazarenes are of the same opinion. But, methinks, there is no need of stretching and straining of nature. Besides, this opinion is inconsistent with other fundamental doctrines of the Mussulman law.

We are all taught to believe, that the souls of the just men, saints and martyrs, immediately on their departure from the body, ascend to Paradise. If so, then they either live there in an unbodied estate, or they have new bodies assigned them by the same providence which gave them their old. Be it which way it pleases God, it will appear a manifest botch in the works of the Omnipotent, and an indecorum in nature, to make these souls either cast off their new bodies at the day of judgment, for the sake of their

old rotten reliicks, after they have enjoyed all the ravishing delights of Eden for so many ages ; or to stand in need of any bodies at all, after they have lived so long in a separate condition. There is no sense in it. Doubtless, this opinion was first hatched by those who believed the sleep of the soul, and held that it was inseparable from the body. For then they had no other way to comfort themselves with any probable hopes of a surviving immortality, but by maintaining, That, as the soul slept with the body in the grave, so both soul and body should conjointly rise again at the day of doom.

Or, perhaps, this figure of our resurrection was inculcated to insinuate the faith of an immortal state into the duller minds of those who were incapable of comprehending either the pre-existence of souls, their self-subsistence after death, or their translation into other bodies.

It seems to me much more easy to believe, according to the most obvious works of nature, that, after our dissolution here, we shall either assume some body of air, fire, or other elemental supplement ; or, by magnetic transmigration, shall be united to some vegetable or animal embryo ; than to dream of recollecting all our scattered ashes together, after so many thousands of years, wherein they have been dispersed, perhaps, through all the ranges of the universe.

Surely, our holy Lawgiver, and all the other Prophets, intended no other thing by the doctrine of the resurrection, but only to convince the world, that the soul was immortal, and that, consequently, there would be a reward of good and bad works, after this life. We shall live for ever, old Lawyer : And what signifies it, whether we have the same bodies or others, so long as we are happy in any state ? And, if we are metamorphosed, we cannot fail of our specifick felicity, since every creature is happy in his own essence. Then let us be apes, dromedaries, camels, or any thing but hogs, and we shall have bliss enough. That creature is the very emblem of uncleanness,

cleanness, and therefore its life cannot be the object of a Mussulman's wish. Yet we know not the laws of our change or transmigration from this mortal life : For the soul, according to Pythagoras and the ancients, is capable of all forms.

If thou wonderest what has put me upon this discourse, it is the remembrance of what I have heard thee relate of the apparition of dead men's bones, in the cemetery of Grand Cairo in Egypt, at a certain season of the year, when multitudes of people by custom flock thither, to behold this wonderful scene of a sham resurrection. I can give it no better title, since, in all probability, it is only the effect of some artifice used by the Christians, to procure money from the admiring crowd ; and I am confirmed in this belief, by a letter I received from Mehemet, the exiled eunuch, who now resides at Cairo : And, having been curious to observe this celebrated miracle, among the other rarities of this city, sent me such an account of this passage, as convinces me there is some cheat in it.

He tells a great many other things of the superstition and ignorance of the Egyptians, as to the pyramids, and the supposed spirits which guard them. In all, he laments the condition of mortals, who have so far degenerated from themselves, and suffered their reason to be so debauched with fables.

Sage Mustapha, thou art of the race of those who have preserved science and philosophy. A halo of light invests thy soul. Let no dark opinion of God and his works eclipse thy intellects,

Paris, 20th of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER IX.

To Solyman Kuslir Aga, Prince of the Black Eunuchs.

THY dispatch came in an happy hour : Yet the contents of it surpris'd me. It is a strange turn of fortune, that the Bassa of Aleppo, after so many rebellions, should become the Sultan's favourite, and be invested with the highest dignity of the Empire. Yet, who knows, but this may be the only effectual means to reclaim him, and of an enemy to render him a friend ? For ambition is a vice so nearly bordering on virtue, so refined and subtle in complexion, that, when the passion which cherishes it is once gratified with its proper object, it soon becomes a virtue itself, and transforms a libertine to a hadgi, ranking a man to-day among the most deserving heroes, who, but yesterday, was in the number of the seditious.

Therefore I cannot but highly applaud the counsel of those who persuaded the Grand Signior to this uncommon choice of the Vizir Azem. The whole empire has languished for want of a man of abilities in that supreme station, ever since the seal was taken from the most illustrious Chausa'in Bassa, through the malice of his enemies. And, in this juncture, they could not have pitched on a man more capable of the charge than this bold Bassa ; who, besides his experience in the wars, both by sea and land, is looked on as the stoutest man in this age. As for his former crimes, they proceeded only from his discontent and thirst of glory, which is now sufficiently allayed by the bounty of our Sovereign. The cause, therefore, of his extravagances being thus seasonably removed, the effect will naturally cease.

But suffer me to ask thee : Do they not resent, at the Seraglio, his approaches to that sanctuary of mortals with such a formidable retinue ? Thou tel-
left

left me he is attended by forty thousand men, an equipage fit for a sovereign Monarch. Perhaps, it is only the effect of his martial genius, and that he is willing to appear like a soldier: Or, it may be, he really suspected danger, and that he was designed for a sacrifice, which made him come, thus guarded, to the feet of his master; that his son might revenge his death, by some desperate attempt on Constantinople. Be it how it pleases God, it seems, the Sultan winked at all, and received him with such marks of his esteem and affection, as are seldom vouchsafed to subjects. I hope the event will answer his expectation. These new methods of clemency may prove more successful than the severe conduct of former times. Men of great souls are sooner subdued by favour, than force and cruelty.

I am extremely obliged to thee for thy instructions, which I shall exactly observe in writing to this supreme Minister. Thou hast matched my own thoughts in this advice: For, knowing that Bassa's temper, it will be policy, as well as justice, frankly to own what I have writ against him, and not stuff my letter with abject, fawning submissions, or sneaking excuses; he is brave himself, and will be pleased to see a man resolute in his duty.

However, let the consequence be what it will, I must follow the measures of my own integrity. There is something so satisfactory in truth, and an honest blunt carriage, as far surpasses the little faint pleasures of artifice and dissimulation. And I should be weary of my life, were I forced to preserve it by such effeminate tricks. Yet, I must confess, it is a vast encouragement to find thy sentiments the same. What is this world, that we should be so fond of it? Or, What is this life of mortals, that we need be so over-studious of prolonging the respiration of that breath, which may, with as much ease, be all breathed out at once, as by so many successive millions of moments; for death properly possesses but an instant of time; no more does life. Every gasp renews the

one, and the last commences and finishes the other: As to pleasure and pain, we generally have an equal share of them. And it appears to me an equal, if not a greater happiness, at once to be freed for ever from the latter, than by such an irksome composition to protract the enjoyment of the former.

Brave Solymán, when I contemplate thy virtue, it inspires me with courage against the vast mists of fear, which the magick of opinion has raised before the eyes of mortals. I embrace thee with an extended soul, and wish thee the two extremes of happiness, plenitude of joys in this life, and an immortal series of felicity in Paradise. Live for ever, thou generous son of Cham.

Paris, 2d of the 9th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER X.

To the most Illustrious Vizir Azem, at the Porte.

BY the souls of all my progenitors, I was glad to hear the news of thy advance to this glorious height of power: Yet, when thou wert Bassa of Aleppo, and held correspondence with the Venetians, I accused thee to the Divan, doing thereby no small service to the Ottoman empire: For which thou hast now reason, in honour, to reward me; knowing that I prevented a great deal of confusion and blood. It will not become the first Minister to cherish private revenge, or harbour ill thoughts of a faithful slave. In discovering thy intrigues at that time, I did but perform my duty to the Grand Signior, thy Lord and mine. Nay, for aught thou knowest, I was happily instrumental in saving thy life, which might have been lost in the pursuit of those hazardous projects thou wast then engaged in.

Be

Be it how it will, thou art now living, and installed in the most illustrious charge of the empire. And, without flattery I speak it, a braver man could not have ascended to that dignity. May God long continue thee in it, to the joy and advantage of all the Mussulmans.

All the world extol thy valour and boldness; especially the Nazarenes, among whom the Bassa of Aleppo is famous. They also highly commend thy justice. And thou wilt find in the register that, when I acquainted my Superiors of thy revolt, I was not envious in concealing thy virtue.

Therefore I beg of thee not to be partial in thy resentment; but consider Mahmut as a faithful slave, who will never transgress the commands of the mysterious bench, nor suffer any sinister motives to bias him, though it were in favour of his own brother. For this is the severe conduct that is expected of me by my Superiors, and which thou thyself wilt require at my hands.

But, I believe, thou needest not these addresses to move thee to generosity. Thy own native justice will suggest to thee, that I rather merit a reward than a punishment for doing my duty, though it were in accusing thyself.

Consider, therefore, in thy goodness, and my own innocence, I shall not despair of that protection and favour from thee, which all thy predecessors have afforded me since my arrival at this place. Nay, I think thy friendship and esteem is rather due to me, than a thousand sycophants and flatterers.

I will in this confidence write freely to thee, as I have been commanded; and vent my thoughts without a timorous reserve: For thou art the just Judge of the Judges among the Faithful.

There is no doubt but thou hast heard of the Duke of Lorrain, a famous warrior in these Western parts, but now a prisoner of state in Spain. I sent intelligence last year to Mustapha Berber Aga of the grounds and circumstances of this Prince's confinement, whereof thou can'st not be ignorant. For all

my dispatches are made publick to the Ministers of the blessed Porte.

The brother of that Duke immediately succeeded him, by the King of Spain's orders, in the command of the army in Flanders; they call him Duke Francis. Every body thought that he had consented to the imprisonment of his brother, as being disgusted at his incontinency, avarice, and other vices. It was supposed also, that his own ambition and thirst for honour had corrupted the fidelity and love he owed to the son of his mother, as knowing that by his fall he himself should rise to the dignity of General, which his brother enjoyed during his liberty.

But now it is evident that this Duke Francis did all along dissemble his resentments of his brother's calamity. For he is lately revolted from the King of Spain, and come over to the French, with five thousand horse and foot. He has openly declared, that he will never give rest to his sword, till he has either procured his brother's release, or deeply revenged the injuries that had been done him. He was received by the French King with all imaginable endearments and caresses. The whole Court are emulous in striving to excel one another in the demonstrations of their civility and respect to this Prince; and they have culled out the best quarters for his soldiers. This nation is always hospitable to strangers; more especially to such as court their friendship after this extraordinary way, who enter into their interests, and engage in their quarrels. Yet neither France, nor all the kingdoms in Europe together, can match the bounty of the munificent Porte, which pardons and receives, with open embraces, her most implacable enemies, on their submission and repentance.

Commander of the Mussulman Grandees, thou art but a man, and hast not exceeded that character in the worst of thy errors. Now thou art assumed to a charge which requires the fidelity and prudence of an angel. If thou shalt reform the State and restore the Mussulman affairs to their true lustre, we shall have

have reason to contemplate thy life, in some measure, as a parallel to that of Crassus, who was pardoned three treasons by Cæsar, and afterwards became the most loyal and serviceable man in the Roman empire.

Paris, 2d of the 9th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER XI.

To Mehemet, an exiled Eunuch, at Cairo,
in Egypt.

THOU tellest me wonderful things of Egypt, such as almost surpass credit. And I perceive thou thyself dost not believe the story of the annual resurrection of bones, which is so much talked of by travellers. My cousin Isouf ridiculed it with smart reason, and was almost in danger of his life among the bigotted Moors and Coptites.

But I could hardly imagine there had still remained in that region (which has undergone so many revolutions of government) any footsteps of the primitive Egyptians. Yet, it seems, the Priests of those early ages were particularly careful to transmit to posterity an exact history of their Kings; with Memoirs of their actions; the building of the pyramids; the place of the statues; the magical mirror; the city of the black eagle; the castle of dæmons seated on the brow of the mountain of the moon; the palace of adamant, with innumerable other rarities.

I tell thee, my dear Mehemet, I know not how to believe all these romantick stories. It cramps my reason to hear of a brazen tree with iron branches, and versatile hooks, to catch liars and cheats, and there detain them till they should do right to those whom they have injured. Altogether as improbable
is

is the story of Gabdafarious, the statue set up by King Gariac.

Who can read of that Monarch's being carried in the air by eagles, but may as well believe the romantick voyage of Domingo Gonfales to the Moon. If thou knowest not that story, I will tell thee in short, that this was a certain Spaniard, who, in a passage to the Indies, being by shipwreck cast on shore on the island of St. Helena, with a negro, his slave, they were put to their shifts so far as to divide that unpeopled and desolate island between them, out of pure necessity, that they might both find provision enough to keep them from starving, for it seems there was great scarcity of every thing that served the uses of life.

In this condition, Necessity, the mother of cunning devices, taught them to hold correspondence with one another, though living at opposite angles of the isle, by the help of certain wild swans, which they took out of the nests very young, and brought them up, as they do pigeons at Babylon and Aleppo, to be letter-carriers.

Afterwards, as the story goes, Domingo, trying several experiments on his birds, and finding all successful, at last having got four-and-twenty of them together, and having brought them up to his lure, he ventured his carcase with them in the air, fastening them together with ropes and other materials. But the extravagant animals one day took wing, and carried their master to the Moon; where he resided a considerable time; saw and conversed with divers inhabitants of that neighbouring globe, visited the Courts of several Lunar Princes, and was kindly received by them all, even at the Seraglio of the chief Emperor, or Grand Signior himself. And, having been presented with three stones of matchless virtue, and other rich gifts, he had his audience of Conge, and came down to the earth again, where he published a journal of his travels, out of which I have extracted this short epitome; not thinking it worth

worth the while to trouble thee with the intire relation of his ingenious whimsies.

Doubtless, there is nothing so easy, as to invent new and unheard-of fables, to amuse the credulous world, and captivate their understandings. And I have told thee this, as a parallel to those monstrous figments of Egypt: Such as that of King Gancam's being carried in a pavilion on the shoulders of spirits: His magical tables, and the rest of his glorious whim-whams. And that of the Queen Borsia, who sat on a fiery throne, and lived in an enchanted castle, whose walls were full of pipes, which conveyed to her the addresses of all sorts of plaintiffs, and her decree and decision of controversies back again to them. Such another is that of Bardefir's silver tower, and his sitting before his people in the clouds of heaven: And Bedoura's sending an angel who made such an horrible roaring, that it caused an earthquake.

Who can, without laughing, read the story of the Idol of the Test, which distinguished between harlots and virgins by the touch of their hand? Or, of the spirits which guard the pyramids, one like a naked woman, walking about in the open air at noon, and making men run mad for love of her? Another in the form of an old man, with a basket on his head, and a censer in his hand? A third, of a black woman, with a monstrous child in her arms? There is no end of such fables. Neither can any man of reason stoop to so much easiness as to regard them. And it is a pleasure to me when I consider thee as a man actually satyrical upon opinions and traditions repugnant to sense.

Mehemet, whilst thou art in Egypt, remember that thou wert born in Arabia, where science has flourished for these thousand years.

Paris, 18th of the 9th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LET.

LETTER XII.

To Zornetan Mustapha, Bassa of the Sea.

I Will not pretend to divination, nor flatter thee with presages of better fortune against the Venetians, during thy command of the Navy, than thy predecessors have had ; yet I believe thou hast more honesty and valour than some of them. And I congratulate thy rise to this dignity.

If my intelligence be true, a more glorious fleet has not sailed out of the Ottoman harbours, than appears now at sea, under thy command. May thy success answer the expectation of the Mussulmans. But I tell thee, thou hast need to look about thee, for thou wilt encounter a valiant and subtle enemy.

These Venetians are not, like the rest of the Nazarenes, superstitiously devoted to the sentiments of their Priests. That kind of bigotry chains up men's spirits, and renders them effeminate : It blinds them and robs them of their sense and native vigour. But these are bold, resolute people, fearing neither man nor the devil. They are also well versed in stratagems, being as cunning as serpents. In fine, Venice is a commonwealth made up of soldiers and statesmen : And thou can'st not expect that the sea makes them degenerate. Therefore look for hot entertainment whenever thou engagest those aboriginal tarpawlins. I speak not this to discourage thee, but to arm thee with due caution. Thou knowest the same God who made them, made thee, and all the men in thy fleet. Thou hast also the happiness to serve the most victorious empire in the world. Fear nothing therefore : But, when thou loosest from the Hellespont, with the invincible fleet, adorned with ensigns of high renown, the prosperous streamers of Mahomet ; when thou hearest the all-chearing clarions and timbrels, breathing the lofty menaces, the vital airs of war ; then let thy
noble

noble heart flourish with brave thoughts and brisk resolutions. Yet let not a false assurance of victory make thee rash, and bereave thee of that conduct, which is as necessary a qualification in a General as courage. Consider that the fortune of battles is uncertain: Therefore do all things with great precaution. Trust not to the force of thy commission, in that thou fightest for the law and honour of thy Prophet. But remember the proverb of the Ancients, which says, 'The devil often carries the standard of the living God.' There may be those in thy fleet who are treacherous, and at the devotion of the Nazarenes. For I hear that both Spahi's and Janizaries were very unwilling to embark themselves; and God knows, how far Venetian gold may work on some of their Officers. Though their resentments seemed to be appeased by the bounty of our glorious Sovereign, yet the smallest occasion may renew their old discontent again, and put them on more dangerous tumults at sea than those they were guilty of ashore: Or, at least, they will become more remiss and cold in the service of the Grand Signior.

Be it how it will, if the Navy have not good success, the blame will be all laid on thee. Pardon; therefore, the freedom I take in advising thee, since it is an argument of my affection and concern for thy honour and safety. And no man can with reason be offended at another for warning him of dangers. In a word, I wish thee the good fortune of the English, who have lately taken an island in the West-Indies from the Spaniards: They call it Jamaica.

It seems the King of Spain had possessed this isle, from the time of the first conquest in America, where his subjects had committed horrid cruelties on the natives; for which they are now punished by that new Commonwealth, who boast that they are established by God to reform or overturn all the kingdoms of Europe.

Thou hast heard, I suppose, of Oliver, the Sovereign of that nation. He appears like another
Gingiz

Gingiz Cham, setting up for a Prophet, and Founder of a new empire. He has refused the title of King, which was offered him by the English states, with all the ensigns of royalty. But he aims at a more sublime character, laying the foundation of his hopes in a pretended modesty, assuming only the style of Protector. They say he talks of leading an army to the gates of Rome, and, when he has subdued the Pope, that he will march or sail to Constantinople, and drive the Grand Signior out of his Seraglio.

I tell thee, these are things not to be contemned or laughed at. For this Oliver has the fame of a great and invincible General. And, I can assure thee, all the neighbouring Kings and States court his friendship. In fine, he makes the most formidable figure at present of any Prince in these Western parts.

If it will divert thee at sea to hear of the transactions by land, know, that Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, son of the German Emperor, is elected King of the Romans, in the room of his deceased brother. There is also a Diet at Franckfort, where they have too many discords and quarrels of their own, to have leisure to plot any mischief against the empire of True Believers. These Infidels, in their publick Councils, are like women, scolding away their time that should be employed in action.

There arrives daily a great deal of news out of Sweden, Muscovy, and Poland: One post informs us of a plague raging at Moscow, and other cities of that northern tract: Another alarms us with intelligence of sieges and plundering of towns, dispeopling of provinces, and a deluge of blood and slaughter; for the Swedes, espousing the quarrel of the Muscovites, endeavour to make their own game in Poland; many Princes and great Men, with their towns, villages, and vassals, revolting daily from the unfortunate Casimir, and submitting to the Swedish Monarch.

And, here in France, those that go not to the wars make private campaigns at home. Here is nothing but

but duelling and murder among men of the sword; whilst the ecclesiasticks are combating one another with their pens, and the lawyers with their tongues.

In Switzerland they are mad about religion. At Dantzick two eagles were seen combating in the air. And, as if all nature were in a ferment, the winds have been at variance in the bowels of the earth, which has occasioned frequent earthquakes in that part of Germany. The King of Poland's brother is dead, and the Queen-Mother of Sweden.

We must all die at the determined hour: And there is no other terror in death, but what is created by our own opinion, nor any greater pain than that attending our birth. For at our dissolution every element of which we are compounded takes its proper share, and that which is divine in us returns to that which is divine in the universe.

Paris, 24th of the 9th Moon,
of the Year 1655.

LETTER XIII.

To Pestell Hali, his Brother, Master of the
Customs at Constantinople.

OUR kinsman Isouf is now gone for Muscovy, having visited the most remarkable places in this kingdom, I received a letter from him, dated at Dieppe, a sea-town over-against the English coast. He was just a going aboard, as he tells me, when he delivered his dispatch to the post. God grant him a prosperous voyage to that region, and whithersoever his genius or fortune carries him.

I was extremely pleased with his conversation. Whilst he was in Paris, I was never sensible of melancholy, unless it were in the evenings, which forced us to part company. He has an excellent memory, and recounts all the adventures of his life
with

with a great deal of ease both to himself and his hearers. He never was at a loss for matter, or confounded one circumstance with another, but, ranking every thing in its due time and place, delivered all with a clearness and grace, which affected me with singular delight.

Besides, he has a ready wit, lively fancy, and judgment enough for one of his years. I tell thee the relations he has made of his travels, with his regular deportment here in Paris, of which I have been a witness, have imprinted in me such an opinion of his ability, that I have trusted him with some particular instructions, in order to a settled correspondence between us, in whatsoever Court he resides. For, in a word, I find him mature enough for business of moment: And it is a pity his parts should be buried, without ever appearing in action.

If he succeeds in what I have put him upon, when he arrives at Archangel, a sea-port in Russia, and a place of great commerce and traffick, I shall have good reason to hope for more important matters, when he comes to Moscow, the chief city of the men who worship the eyes of their Emperour. And then it will be time to give a due character of him to the Ministers of the Porte: Wherein thou wilt have many opportunities to perform the office of a kinsman and friend. Those of the same blood ought thus to serve one another with integrity and affection: For in so doing we help ourselves, strengthen the interest of our family, and shall find returns in time of need. As thou hast received favour from Kerker Hassan Bassa, on the score of being his countryman; so there is a greater reason that thou shouldst shew kindness to Isouf, who partakes of our blood.

There arises a vast complacency from doing good offices, though to a stranger, or even to an enemy, Man is naturally generous; and he has debauched his soul, who acts contrary to this principle. Yet the greatest part of men are degenerated. They pursue lions, tygers, bears, and such-like ravenous beasts with

inex-

inexorable hatred and revenge; they bear secret antipathies against spiders, toads, serpents, and other venomous creatures; and yet they are all these things, or worse, themselves. Ever since Astræa abandoned the earth, there has been a strange metamorphosis in our race: Men have for the most part forsaken their humanity, and changed nature with the savages. Nay, we transcend them in whatsoever is cruel and vicious: As if our reason were given us only to teach us the most refined methods of impiety, and to be a more exquisite spur to vice.

Isouf has presented me with solid observations of this kind in his travels, especially in Africk: He says that region is not more prolifick of strange and horrible beasts, than it is of monstrous men, brutes and devils in human shape. And, though he relates some fair things of the Indians, and other people in Asia, yet they are intermixed with tragical reports and mournful memoirs; such as stain the history of our race, and make it evident, that it is hard to meet with one good man in ten thousand. The whole world is over-run with oppression, cruelty, avarice, perfidy, and lust.

He relates strange things of the antiquities of Egypt. He calls it the only scene of wonders and miracles on earth. Indeed, this country was ever famous among all nations, for the wisdom and learning of their Priests; who, in the first age of the world, understood all the secrets of the elements, the virtue of plants and minerals, and were perfectly versed in the science of the stars and spirits, and in all kinds of mysterious knowledge. They were said to make statues and images that could speak, walk, run, and counterfeit all human actions. They were also exquisite in making miraculous talismans, and mirrors, with any kind of magical work, whereby they kept the people, and even the Princes, in profound awe and veneration of their prodigious knowledge and power, and likewise defended their country against all invaders. For no sooner did an enemy appear with his armies on the frontiers of Egypt,

gypt, but these Priests had present intimation of it by their secret art, even in their chambers, perhaps at a hundred leagues distance. Then, by their incantments, they either caused fire to consume them in their camps, or turned their swords one against another, or sent an army of winged serpents to destroy them. So that for many ages no King ever prospered that ever fought against the Egyptians.

But let not thou and I, dear brother, suffer our reason to degenerate, by giving credit to fictions and romances, though vouched by some of our countrymen, such as Morat Alzeman, Eb'n Abdalhokm, and others.

He also tells me remarkable passages of the pyramids of Cairo, the overflowings of the Nile, the mummies, and other things, which I have not now time to rehearse; but in another letter I will gratify thee with a more ample account of his observations.

In the mean time, live thou to enjoy the fruits of thy own travels in the East; which if it matches not the south in prodigies and stupendous inventions; yet it surpasses both it, and all the rest of the world, in justice and morality.

Paris, 17th of the 11th Moon;
of the Year 1655.

LETTER XIV.

To Ismael Kaidar, Cheik, a Man of the Law.

THOU hast the character and fame of a great Historian; a man of intelligence both in the records of past times, and the transactions of the present. Therefore the name of Christina, late Queen of Sweden, cannot be strange to thee. I doubt not but thou hast heard of this Princess, so celebrated throughout the earth for her learning, and other

other noble accomplishments; and how she voluntarily resigned the Crown to one of her kinsmen. But, perhaps, thou knewest not the true motives which induced her to this royal caprice: For it deserves no better name, as thou wilt understand by the sequel.

Her father, who, for his successful wars, and perpetual victories, was called the Great Gustavus, dying, left her in the intire possession of his kingdom, and new conquests in Germany. But, during the time of her reign, Piementelli, the Spanish Ambassador at Stockholm, by daily conversing with this great Queen, used such plausible insinuations, as to prevail on her to have a more favourable opinion of the Pope, and his religion, than she had before entertained. For all the Swedes are educated in an aversion for those of the Roman faith. I need not explain to thee these distinctions of belief among the Nazarenes; thou art versed in their history, as well as in our own. Suffice it to say, that this Ambassador possessed Christina with so fair an idea of the Catholick religion, that she abandoned her Crown, and has ever since been a Queen errant, a royal rambler through Europe, being resolved to make experiment of the Generosity of Catholick Princes, whose virtue Piementelli had so highly extolled.

It would be a work of seven moons for the most industrious scribe to relate all the particular magnificences with which she has been entertained in her travels through Germany, Flanders, Alsace, Inspruck, Italy, and Rome, where she now resides. Every Prince of the Roman Church, through whose territories she passed, was ambitious to appear prodigal of his favours and civilities to this illustrious stranger: Perhaps, to evade the lashes of her wit, which, they say, is very satyrical. Or, it may be for other reasons more forcible and poignant. Be it how it will, the Roman wits have not spared her, as thou wilt perceive by the following verses, which, on the first day of the moon of January, were found
in

in the hand of Pasquin, and on the portal of the palace Farnese, where she resides :

‘Pazza, Gobba, & Zoppa viene dal Norte,
 ‘Del Monarcha invitto l’indigna figlia,
 ‘Mentre Pologna Gente & si Scompiglia,
 ‘A vane Pompe Rome apre le Porte;
 ‘Contra questi applausi l’ungrida forte,
 ‘Et in balle Note l’altro bis Biglia.
 ‘Corre la Sciocca Genti, alza le ciglia,
 ‘Ride Pasquin del Papa, & della Corte.
 ‘Su fu venite voi Ruffiani Snelli,
 ‘Et portate a CHRISTINA ’stravagante,
 ‘Di venere il Scettro ne i Pazzarelli:
 ‘Vuol parer dotta, et è rozza Pedante.
 ‘E in Braccio a mangiator di Ravanelli,
 ‘Voul parer casta, & è Putana Errante.’

I send thee these verses in the original, knowing thou art a critick in the Italian language; besides, they will not be found so well in Arabick. Thou, that hast been in Rome, knowest what Pasquin is, and art no stranger to the humours of that city.

Let not lampoons of morose Italians abate thy charity for this renowned Princess: But let her extravagances be an argument of the greatness of her soul; and remember the old Roman proverb, which says, ‘There is no surpassing genius without some mixture of madness.’

Paris, 30th of the 1st Moon,
 of the Year 1656.

LET-

LETTER XV.

To the same.

HAVING the space of an hour before the post goes, I could not forbear to inform thee of a new star which lately appeared in these parts, moving in a direct line from East to North. The Astronomers have made accurate observations on it, and yet are at a loss what to conclude: Some say it is below the moon, others place it in the sphere of the fixed stars. One will have it a meteor; a second affirms it to be a planet; whilst the Jews report every-where, that it is the star of Jacob, and a sign that their Messiah is at hand.

Nathan Ben Saddi, one of that nation at Vienna, sends me strange stories concerning the prodigies which shall go before, and accompany the appearance of the Deliverer of Israel (as he calls-him.)

He says, There shall speedily come a sort of people from the uttermost parts of the earth, of a black and horrible aspect, so that whoever shall but cast an eye on any of them shall immediately die, as by the glance of a basilisk. For every one of them shall have two heads, and seven eyes, glowing and sending forth sparks of fire as poisonous as the flashes of the wind El-Samiel in Arabia. They shall also be swift as stags. And about the same time an extraordinary heat shall flow from the sun, which, being dispersed through the elements, shall corrupt the air, earth, and waters, and infect all this lower world with such pestilential qualities, that a million of Gentiles (for so the Jews call all that are not of their own nation) shall die every day. And men shall be in so great consternation, that they shall run up and down the streets crying, 'Wo, wo to us and our children!' They shall dig their own graves, and go down into them of their own accord, expecting death. But that, all this time, the Jews shall be in safety and in health.

This Hebrew adds, that the light of the sun shall be totally extinguished for the space of thirty days ; during which horrible darkness the Christians and Mahometans shall acknowledge their errors, and many of them shall embrace the law of Moses ; for which God, being moved to mercy, will restore that planet again to its former brightness.

But what he says next is an unhappy presage to the Romans, whose empire, according to the tradition, shall be extended over all the regions of the earth, for the space of nine moons. After which term, God shall send the first Messias, the son of Joseph, who shall gather the dispersed tribes of Israel, and conduct them to Jerusalem ; from whence he shall issue forth, with a victorious army, and lay waste the Roman empire, sack Rome itself, and carry away the immense riches of the Christians to Jerusalem ; and the very fear of him shall reduce all nations to his obedience. He shall fight with Armillai Harascha, the Antichrist of the Christians, and shall destroy two hundred thousand of Armillai's followers ; but, in the end, shall be slain himself, and the good angels shall transport his body to the apartment of the fathers.

The Jews hold, That this Armillai shall spring out of an image of the Virgin Mary in Rome, made of marble, with which the most wicked and profligate among men shall be inamoured, and commit the most execrable uncleanness that can be named. The result of these adulterous congresses shall be, that the statue, by a supernatural power, shall prove impregnate ; and, cleaving asunder, shall be delivered of this young Antichrist, who is to vex and persecute the Jews, and afflict them with greater calamities, than either they, or their fathers, felt, since the beginning of the world. They shall be forced to flee into the desarts, and hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth, living only on the grass and herbage, with the leaves of trees, till the great Michael, the archangel, shall thrice wind his horn. Then shall the second Messias, the son

of David, with Elias the prophet, appear, who shall rescue them out of all their troubles, and lead them triumphant to Paradise.

This is the sum of what Nathan and all the Jews believe concerning the last times, which, they say, are now approaching; as is evident by the rising of this new star, accompanied with terrible thunders and lightnings. And the chief Patriarch or Prince of the Jews is come from Jerusalem to Vienna, to prepare those of his nation in the Western parts for the grand revolutions, which they believe are ready to fall out in the world. All the Jews in that city went out a league to meet him, with great pomp and solemnity.

In the mean while, I hear that the son of the late Vizir Azem makes a confusion among you at Constantinople, and the parts adjacent, being at the head of fifty thousand men, on pretence to revenge the death of his father, but really to recover his ravished mistress, the fair Sultana Zamiovre, who was forced from his seraglio by the Grand Signior's command. Women and wine, according to the proverb of the Franks, make all the disturbance in the world. And, without calling to remembrance the Trojan wars, the unhappy effects of Helena's perfidy, we may conclude, that women are the occasions of many quarrels among us.

There is a peace lately concluded between the French and the new English Commonwealth: By which means the exiled King of the Scots was forced to depart from this realm, which has been his sanctuary for many years. He went away at the beginning of the treaty, and has wandered up and down Germany ever since; sometimes keeping a Court like a King, at other times living incognito, and very privately, with only two or three attendants. That poor Prince is very unfortunate; yet, they say he bears his calamity with singular moderation, and a certain royal stiffness of mind, which will rather break than bend.

This Pope is a great Peace-maker, and has sent Nuncio's with letters to all the Princes in Christendom within the pale of the Roman church, earnestly persuading them to unity and friendship, that so their arms may be turned against the Mussulmans. His predecessor was of another sentiment, and would not intermeddle with the quarrels of any. One day as he was looking out of a window of his palace, with some Cardinals, they espied two men fighting in the street; whereupon they desired the Holy Father to interpose his authority, and command peace: But he refused, saying, 'Let them fight it out, and then they will be good friends of course.' And, turning to the Spanish Ambassador, he said, 'So will it fare with your Master and the King of France; when they have sufficiently wearied one another with wars, they will gladly embrace the proposals of peace.'

Here is great rejoicing for the reconciliation newly made between the King and his uncle, the Duke of Orleans, who have been estranged a long time, the latter having espoused the Prince of Conde's cause. But now he has abandoned it, and is come to the Court.

These Infidels are as inconstant as the winds, which vary to all the points of the compass.

Paris, 30th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER XVI.

To Solyman, his Cousin, at Scutari.

I See thou art given over to a spirit of discontent. Nothing can please thee. Thou murmurest at Providence, and castest obloquies on the ways of God: As if the order of all things, and the established

blissed œconomy of the universe, must be changed, to gratify thy humour.

Formerly thou wert troubled with dull, melancholy thoughts about religion: Now thou art angry with thy trade, and pinest that thou wert not educated in the academy. A mechanick life, thou sayest, is tedious and irksome; besides, that it is beneath one of thy blood to be always employed in making of turbants. Thou wishest rather to have been a courtier, soldier, or any thing save what thou art.

Cousin, let not pride and ambition corrupt thy manners. Dost thou not consider, that all True Believers are obliged to exercise some manual occupation, and that the Sultan himself is not exempted from this duty? Did not the Prophet himself practise it, and injoin it to all his followers? Hast thou not heard of his words, when he said, 'No man can eat any thing sweeter in this world, than what is acquired by his own labour.' Doubtless, all the Prophets, and holy men, have gained their bread by their lawful employments. Adam was a Gardener, Abel a Shepherd, Seth a Weaver, Enoch a Taylor, Noah a Shipwright, Moses, Saguib, and Mahomet were Shepherds; Jesus the Son of Mary a Carpenter, Abu-Becre, Omar, Othman, Gali, and Gabdorachaman were Merchants.

Dost thou esteem thyself of better blood than Adam, from whom thou receivedst thine? For shame prefer not thyself to Noah, the Restorer of mankind, to Jesus the Messias, to Mahomet our holy Law-giver, and to the rest of those excellent persons, who thought it no contempt to work at their several trades, and eat the bread of their own labour.

Besides, Dost thou consider the dangerous intrigues of a Prince's Court? Art thou sufficiently armed with wit and dexterity, to secure thy station against the wily trains of designing men? I do not reproach thy abilities: Yet I think thou wilt do better in the post allotted thee by destiny; that is, in thy proper calling, than in the perilous condition

of those who stand or fall at the pleasure of others. Whereas thou art now thy own man, and needest fear no tempest of state, or frowns of thy Prince, so long as thou pursuest none but thy private affairs. Many sovereign Monarchs have envied such as thee, when they have seen, how chearfully and quietly they pass away their time, under the umbrella of an obscure and private life: Whereas, at the Court, there is nothing but intriguing, plotting, and treachery; one undermining another, to make way for their own advancement. The Court is a perfect theatre of fraud, dissimulation, envy, malice, and a thousand vices, which there act their various parts, under the habit and disguise of seeming virtues. There a man must flatter the great, and speak against his own sense and the truth, to procure the favour of some dignified fool: Than which nothing is more ignoble and base.

This puts me in mind of a pleasant repartee, which Diogenes the philosopher gave to a courtier. The spark passing by Diogenes, as he sat in a tub eating of turneps, put this scoff upon him, 'Diogenes,' said he, 'if thou wouldest but learn the art of flattery, thou needest not sit here in a tub, scratching of roots.' To whom the philosopher replied, 'And thou, vain-glorious man, if thou wouldest but learn to live contented with my homely fare, needest not condescend to the fawning of a spaniel.'

But, Cousin, let not this passage cause thee to emulate the philosopher's manner of life, for he had his vices as well as other men. If he was no flatterer, yet he was proud and opinionative: He laid trains for the applause of men in all his actions, and so taught others to become flatterers, though he was none himself. All his pretended humility, mortification, and rigour, were but so many decoys for fame. Of this Plato was sensible, who was a far more excellent philosopher than he. As this sage was one day walking, with some of his friends, in the fields, they shewed him Diogenes standing up to the chin in water, whose superficies was frozen-over,
saying

saving one hole that Diogenes had made for himself : ' Push, says Plato, don't regard him, he'll soon be out : For, had he not seen us coming this way, he would not have put himself to this pain.' Another time, this philosopher came to Plato's house, and as he walked on the rich carpets, with which the floor of the hall was covered : ' See, said Diogenes, How I trample on Plato's pride.' ' Yes, said Plato, ' but with greater pride.'

Certainly, the greatest Philosophers, Doctors, and even Saints themselves, have their errors and failings. Do not therefore affect to change thy calling, for the life of a student, or a contemplative man. For the same discontent will still haunt thee in that state, which makes thee so uneasy now : Thou art a perfect stranger to the intolerable anguish of mind which afflicts thinking men, and such as apply themselves to the study of sciences. They labour under a perpetual thirst of knowledge, and the more they learn, the greater and more ardent is their desire of farther discoveries. So that the most accomplished sages are no more satisfied with their own acquisitions, than he who has never meddled with books.

Then, as to their bodies, they are always vexed with one malady or other, proceeding from the violent agitation of their spirits, the intenseness of their thoughts, perpetual poring upon books, and their sedentary life.

In all that I have said, I do not dissuade thee from seeking after knowledge ; I rather counsel thee to read books, and I gave thee some advice in a former letter : But do it with moderation. Let not thy studies intrench on the affairs of thy calling. Read histories, or other tracts, according to thy fancy, when thou hast nothing else to do. But do not follow it so close, as if thou aspiredst to the character of a complete historian or philosopher. Still remember that thou art a turban-maker, and that by the decrees of fate thou art born for this business. Follow it with alacrity and mirth. When thou art at thy work, it will be pleasant meditating on what

thou hast read at thy spare hours. Thou wilt find thyself much more happy, in thus mixing studies with the necessary offices of thy trade, than in abandoning thyself wholly to a contemplative life. And, in the midst of thy disgusts, thou mayest comfort thyself with this reflection, that thou art of none of the most despicable callings which serve the necessities of man's body. Had thy employment been only to make papouches or sandals, which cover the feet, it might have been an argument of discontent to thee, in regard the foot is the most contemptible member of the body. But now thou passest thy time in making ornaments for the head, which is the noblest part, and Commander of all the rest, thou hast no reason to repine.

If, after all, thou resolvest to change thy course of life, I advise thee to turn soldier, for then thou must be contented and patient per force.

Paris, 13th of the 4th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER XVII.

To Melec Amet.

THE Nazarenes boast much of the new converts they have made from the Mussulman law to the faith of Jesus the son of Mary. On the 23d of the last moon, a Moor of Tripoli was baptised in a church of this city; and, the next day, he was anointed with their chrism or holy oil (as they call it) which, they say, has a virtue to confirm and strengthen him in his new religion. On the 25th, he was cloathed all in white linen, and walked in procession through the streets, with musick playing before them, whilst the ground was strewed with flowers. When he arrived at the great mosque of this city, a Priest gave him that which they

they esteem the body of the Messias, but, in reality, is only a wafer with the figure of a man crucified on it. These wafers are made, and sold to the Priests, by the common bakers of the town; and yet they make the poor, ignorant people believe with four words they can change them into an immortal God.

The renegado Moor appears very zealous and devout, frequenting the temples, and visiting all holy places. He walks along the streets with beads in his hands, which the people interpret as an argument of his piety to the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. For, when they pray to her, it is the custom to number their oraisons on beads. But all this while they consider not that he may be an hypocrite, as to their religion; and, instead of addressing his prayers to her, may direct them to God alone; as all the True Faithful do, who use beads in rehearsing the divine ejaculations, as well as the Christians, in repeating their Ave Maria, which, they say, was the salutation that Gabriel gave the Virgin, when he entered her oratory.

Be it how it will, he gets abundance of money by his devotion: For the Franks are really very charitable, and give plentiful alms to the poor; but especially to one under his circumstances they are extremely liberal, that so they may imprint in him a more fervent affection and profound reverence for their religion.

But he is not the only convert they brag of. Many captives they either wheedle or force to turn Christians. Thus, he that was taken at sea by the ships of Malta twelve years ago, when it was reported through Christendom, that he was the Grand Signior's son, is of late turned Christian and Friar, having solemnly, and in publick, abjured the Mussulman law, cursed our holy Prophet, and all those of his race, with the Believers of the Alcoran. He is like to come to great preferment in the Roman church: They call him The Ottoman Father; and boast, that the true heir of the Turkish empire is a Christian, and in their custody,

Yet, after all, the profelyte of greatest fame is Don Philipppo, the son of the Bey of Tunis, of whom I made mention in one of my former letters. This Prince is now at Valencia, under the King of Spain's jurisdiction, who allows him a considerable pension, and has given him leave to marry a Princess of that country, very beautiful and ingenious, but of a poor fortune: He has one son by her. It is said the King of Spain designs to set forth a mighty fleet of ships; and, having furnished this Prince with all things necessary for a warlike expedition, will send him, thus equipped, to claim the government of Tunis; or, in case of a denial, to make a descent in that kingdom, and fight for it. But I believe this will only prove a Spanish rhodomontade, that Monarch having work enough cut out for him in Europe and America, by the French and English, to divert him from any such wild enterprize on Africk. However it be, this Don Philipppo is much talked of in Christendom, and the Spaniards flatter themselves with the hopes of conquering a great part of Barbary by his means, he having many friends, and a considerable interest in those parts.

Thou mayest acquaint the Divan, that Osman the dwarf is still living, and serves the Porte with a secret and untainted zeal. Two days ago he discovered a cunning practice of Cardinal Mazarine, whose motions and intrigues he watches very narrowly. He assures me, that this Minister has dispatched away two agents to the King of Sweden and Elector of Brandenburg, with a letter to each of these Princes, from the King of France, also with blank papers, and the King's seal, giving them instructions to fill up their blanks, and seal them with the King's signet, according as they found the treaty go forward between those Princes: The main design of this trick being to hinder them from entering into a league against the King of Poland, by all the artifice these agents could use, in exactly timing and suiting their counterfeit letters to the difficulties and misunderstandings that always hap-
pen

pen in such treaties, that so they may exasperate each party against the other, as occasion offered, without being obliged to send to France for fresh letters, which will breed too much delay, and spoil their design.

By this thou mayest perceive, that Cardinal Mazarine comes not short of his predecessor Richlieu, in managing the affairs of foreign Courts. He is the very soul of all the grand business in Christendom.

A general heart-burning has possessed the French, especially the inhabitants of Paris, ever since the conclusion of last year, when the King issued out certain orders, commanding that all the gold and silver money in the kingdom should be brought into his mint to be new coined. The merchants first complained of this edict; and then it was murmured at by all the trading people. At length the Parliament of Paris took it into their consideration, and opposed the King's pleasure: Upon which he banished eight of their members, and has several times prohibited them to assemble; yet they persisted to meet till he banished more of them: Which, instead of awing them into the expected compliances, has but incensed them more: And the discontented clergy blow up the coals, as do likewise the friends of the Prince of Conde. The Parliament are very bold and peremptory in their proceedings, have expressly forbid the citizens of Paris to obey the King's order, and decreed that nothing shall be done in their assembly, till the banished Senators be recalled.

Things being at this pass, we expect nothing but insurrections, massacres, and other effects of popular fury. The rich are laying up vast quantities of corn and other provisions, as if they expected a siege. And the poor fare the better for it, whilst great largesses are given among them by the Grantees of the Parliament, to engage them in the faction. Besides, thou knowest, the multitude always delight in novelty and state-tempests, hoping for

plunder, and to enrich themselves by the ruin of others.

I know not what conduct is fittest for me to use in this case. Whether it will be best for me to abide in this city or follow the Court, which is now at La Fere in Picardy: Or, Whether I should retire to some other place, less liable to civil disturbances. I wish the Ministers of the Porte would send me full instructions, what I ought to do in these emergencies.

From Rome we hear, that the Pope and Cardinals are in great consternation on some intelligence they have received, that the English intend to make a descent on the territories of the Church. That nation is now become the great bug-bear of all Europe, since they have moulded themselves into a Commonwealth.

Every kingdom and empire have a time to rise, and another to fall. But who can determine the period wherein the Ottoman glory will decline, which is not yet advanced to its zenith.

Paris, 27th of the 5th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER XVIII.

To Sedree Al' Giraw'n, Chief Treasurer to
the Grand Signior.

THY virtues have at length raised thee to a glorious trust, the charge of immense wealth. Thou hast in thy custody the riches which cannot be matched in the universe. God inspire thee with graces suitable to a dignity so full of temptations. I hope thou wilt not be affronted at my prayer, as was thy predecessor Kienan Bassa, at some counsels of like nature, which I gave him in a letter. Some men are strangely cholerick, and look on those as enemies who give them good advice. I only warn-
ed

ed him of the ordinary cheats that are practised at certain times in the treasury, which thou knowest to be true, as well as I. And I tell thee farther, he himself was suspected by many in the Seraglio not to have been altogether exempt from guilt.

Whether he were or not, I performed but my duty in giving him necessary cautions. For such is the will of my Superiors, that I should not be afraid to unravel the secrets of those that are false to the Grand Signior. I did not charge him with such a crime, and therefore he had no reason to be angry: But some men will pick a quarrel with their own shadows. In a word, this Grandee forgot himself.

In saying so, I do not reflect on his original, or that he was found sleeping on a dunghil in Russia, a poor ragged infant, when the Tartars took him captive, among many thousands of others, in the plunder of Isinarow, and sold them to the Capa Agasi, for thirteen piasters, by reason of his beauty. I do not call to mind the circumstances of his youth; since it is common for the meanest slaves to arrive at an extraordinary grandeur by their merits, or at least through the favour of the Sultan.

But what I aim at is, that, in his being disgusted at the remonstrances I have made of some private and sinister practice in the Treasury, he forgot that he himself is still a slave to the Grand Signior, as well as I, and therefore not above instruction.

Well, it seems he is now made Captain Bassa, and thou succeedest him in the office of Treasurer. To him I wish all imaginable success and victories at sea, for the sake of our great Master and the Mussulman empire; to thee for thy own sake, and for my brother's, whom I know thou wilt ever respect as a friend, I wish increase of riches and honours, even as thy merit and services augment in the esteem of the Sultan, and of all the world.

And I tell thee I have far livelier hopes to see this latter wish take effect than the former: For what reason have we to expect better luck from the courage

rage or conduct of this Ourcos Kienan, than from the brave Zornesfan Mustapha, who commanded the fleet last year?

This unhappy thought has put me into as melancholy a humour, as *Aeneas* was in when the Queen of Carthage required an account of the Trojan wars: For I have heard that Cara Mustapha Bassa succeeded Zornesfan in the command of the fleet, and, in the revolution of a moon, was made Mansoul again, for the sake of Kienan Bassa, or rather for the sake of the licentious soldiers, who, it seems, command all things. I have been informed also of all the other tragedies acted at the Seraglio since the second moon of this year. Neither are the causes and origin of so much slaughter and bloodshed hid from me. It is too apparent, that there is an universal disorder and corruption in the discipline of the Janizaries.

I formerly wrote to the Kiaya Bey on this account. But it seems avarice, the root of all evil, had rendered him insensible and obdurate.

Is it not a shame, that the pay of those who serve the Grand Signior in the wars should be detained, not three or four moons, but five or six years, by their corrupt Officers? They sit at home enjoying their ease, revelling in taverns, and committing a thousand riots; whilst the others undergo numberless fatigues abroad, and are reduced to the extremest necessities, not having so much as the vests allowed them by the Sultan, to cover their nakedness! And, if they complain of their sufferings, instead of redress, they meet with nothing but taunts and reproaches, as if they were not worthy to eat the Sultan's bread and salt, though they freely hazard their lives for him. It is no wonder the Janizaries are so unbridled in their rage, after so many provocations.

Yet I cannot but lament the fate of those unfortunate men, who were sacrificed to the fury of that insolent militia: Especially, I condole the loss of the brave Solyman Kyzlir Aga. The Janizaries had an old grudge against him, ever since his hot dispute

dispute with the Bostangi Bassa, and now they were resolved to execute their revenge.

As for the Kiaya Bey, it seems to be a stroke of divine justice, that he, who had been the cause of all this mutiny, should in remorse strangle himself, and so go to hell, as an expiation for the many lives he had cast away.

And there is little less to be said, in respect of the Musti, who was the chief of those who betrayed their master Sultan Ibrahim. To tell thee my resentments, I am heartily sorry for all the rest; but to those who were concerned in that treason there seems no pity due. And the Musti may thank God and his good stars, that his life went not with the others. They report here he is fled into Egypt.

But what was that Gelep Assan, who headed this rabble of mutineers? I have heard nothing of him before the intelligence I received of his sudden rise, and equally precipitate fall, during this tumult. He was, I suppose, some passionate fool, of an ill-contrived midriff, which used to make a quarrel between his heart and his spleen: And from this intestine broil he habitually learned the way to set people together by the ears. A popular man, an incendiary, and one that knew how to wheedle the vulgar to their own ruin. Who can give an account of these things? Or, Who can unravel the web of destiny? Though there is nothing strange in this particular case, yet in the general it is prodigious, that such little instruments should be able to give so terrible a shock to the frame of an ancient and mighty government!

He was a man of no fame or character, and yet, for the space of two moons, he may be said to command the greatest Sovereign of the world, sole proprietor of fame and honour. And, had he pushed on his interest, it is not improbable, but that he might have exalted himself above his master, and secured his post against all after-claps. For, according to my intelligence, he had, during the sedition, heaped together prodigious sums of money,

the

the presents of Bassa's, and other Ministers of the Porte, who all adored this new-rising comet, and sought his protection and favour against the barbarous rabble. But it seems he was infatuated with too much glory, and considered not that every body watches all opportunities and occasions to ruin him : And that his very followers would be the first to betray him, as soon as the hurry of their insurrection was over. This generally happens to all ringleaders of parties. When once the spirits of a faction are spent, the lees (which consist of regret and confusion) are discharged on those who first fermented them, mixed with the revenge of the State.

There are abundance of great and brave-men gone : But the old Negidher was of their Council, and he brought them to ruin, as he did the Corcis of Mecca, when they conspired against the life of the Prophet. This devil entered the temple (where they were assembled) in the shape of an ancient man, decrepid and leaning on a crutch : And, when he was commanded to withdraw, he told them, ' He was a Senior, who had seen all ages, and remarked the occurrences of time ; that he was expert in unfolding secrets, and rendering difficult things easy.' In a word, he used so many plausible insinuations, that they admitted him into their assembly. But none of their counsels prospered.

That malicious dæmon is often present in the cabals of seditious men ; and, though they see him not, yet he surely undermines their plots, and brings them to shame and punishment. For he is the spirit of envy ; and though he be himself a rebel, and the ringleader of a faction in the kingdom of the air, yet such is his spiteful nature, that he seldom suffers any rebellion to thrive on earth : Not for any love that he bears to government, but because he delights to be active in mischief, be it what it will ; and the guardian spirits will not suffer him to mix with the established Divans of an empire.

The all-good God preserve thee from the malice of wicked dæmons, that always hover about treasures of gold and silver.

Paris, 22d of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER XIX.

To the same.

THE troubles of the Sublime Porte touched me so nearly, and embarked my soul in such a tempest of sollicitous thoughts and anxieties for the honour and safety of the Osman empire, that I had no leisure to think of my own particular hazards, whilst I was writing the other letter. Yet I have been ingulphed in abundance of vexatious circumstances and perilous accidents.

It generally happens, that, when one misfortune befalls a man, it brings a train along with it. So that at some seasons we seem to be besieged with evils, or, at least, so closely blocked up by an army of calamities, that there is no passage left open, either for relief or intelligence.

So has it fared with me of late, and with thousands of others, I doubt not, in this populous city. The rebellion of the Prince of Conde is the occasion of all this. For the King, having some reasons to apprehend a secret conspiracy of the Prince's friends and well-wishers in Paris and other places, has caused a very severe scrutiny to be made of all strangers and sojourners. The Soubashi's, or Officers, go to every house within their precinct, taking down the names of all the inhabitants in writing, and seizing the persons of those whom they suspect. The prisons are filled with people of all ranks, and the Nobles are sent to the castle in the wood of Vincennes. It is said the King has a list of many thousands

sands of Conde's party in Paris, who designed, on a prefixed day, to take up arms for that Prince ; and that their example would have been followed all over the kingdom.

God knows what is in the hearts of these Infidels ; I am sure Mahmut is wholly a stranger to their plots : Though last year I received certain instructions from the Vizir Azem, commanding me to act secretly in the Prince of Conde's behalf, to abet the faction, and use all the endeavours and art I could to raise a new party for him among the Courtiers. But I waved so dangerous an employment, by proposing to him the vast expences it would require, and the necessity of sending some extraordinary embassy to this Court, to countenance the business. To tell the truth, I esteemed it a thing impracticable, and a mere caprice of that active Bassa, who had a natural kindness for rebels, and delighted to have a hand in difficult undertakings, whether there was any likelihood of success or not.

But he is dead, and let that atone for all his rebellions, when he had the command of Aleppo. I love not to load the departed souls with accusations. What I have to say is in my own vindication, who could not approve his politick chimera : In regard, had it succeeded, no profit or advantage would from thence arise to the Ottoman empire : And, had it been discovered, not only I and all the secrets of my commission would have been laid open to the Infidels, but also it would have been an eternal dishonour and blemish to the high resplendent Porte to be found guilty of violating, in so notorious a manner, the faith it had given to the most ancient and puissant monarchy among the Nazarenes.

Besides, I know not but this Minister had a private grudge against me for accusing him formerly to the Divan, when he held correspondence with the Venetians ; and that he studied this way to be revenged, by employing me in an affair which must needs be my ruin. However, I think I had reason to be cautious and apprehensive of the worst. This
made

made me dispatch to him a letter full of specious umbrages, seeming to approve his design, but intangling it with such difficulties as would divert him from farther thoughts of it.

Yet, after all, I have been really brought into danger, on the bare suspicion of being concerned on the Prince of Conde's side; by which thou mayest guess at the consequence, had I hearkened to the Vizir's advice.

One morning early, the Officers appointed for this purpose entered my chamber: And, having demanded my name, business, and quality, I answered, 'My name was Titus Durlach Nieski; but that for shortness, and to denote my country, I was commonly called Titus the Moldavian; and that by this name I was well known to Cardinal Mazarine, as I had been to his predecessor Richlieu, and other Courtiers of great quality. I told them likewise, that I was a Clerk, who understood some foreign languages, and therefore had been often employed by these Cardinals, in translating books out of Greek and Arabick into Latin and French: For which reason, being recommended by Cardinal Richlieu, I had been introduced into the acquaintance of several Nobles, whose children I taught those languages: And that some of them had promised to make me Curate of St. Stephen's church, as soon as it was vacant.'

They seemed to be very well satisfied with what I said, but told me moreover, 'They had a commission to search my lodgings for arms and treasonable papers.'

It is impossible to express the horror I was in, when I saw them go roundly to work, prying into every corner, and searching my trunks, coffers, and even my bed itself. Not that I had any guilt upon me of concealing either arms or papers relating to this conspiracy, but my concern was for my box of letters to the Ministers of the Porte. As for arms, they found no other but an old sword, which I told them I travelled with out of my own country, and
a brace

a brace of pistols for the same use, to defend me from robbers, assassins, and other injuries.

These fellows seemed mightily pleased with the curious workmanship of my weapons, surveyed them all over, and, having drawn my sword out of the scabbard, and made a pass or two with it against the wall, after the French mode of fencing, they put it up again, telling me, 'they had no authority to take these arms from me, since they were necessary for my defence.' But when they came to my box of letters, and saw them written in a strange character which none of them could read, they began to look on one another, and change their countenance, as if there was some dangerous matter contained in these papers, and therefore writ in cyphers.

They went aside to one end of the chamber, whispering together, and nodding their heads, with all the symptoms of jealousy. At length, I, interrupting them, said, 'You need not, Gentlemen, be concerned about these papers; they were left with me by a Merchant-Jew of my acquaintance, and they are letters of correspondence between him and some of his brethren, at Rome, Venice, Amsterdam, and other places in Europe. It is therefore they are written in a character, which to you appears strange, it being Hebrew, the national language of the Jews. They contain only matters of traffick, being letters of mart and exchange: For, you know, the Jews are the greatest merchants, brokers, and bankers in the world.'

These words, with some gold which I gave them, dispersed all their suspicions, cleared up their cloudy brows, and turned their frowns into smiles, and complimentary addresses. They told me, 'I was a very honest man, and they would do me what service they could.' So bid me adieu.

By this thou mayest see the mighty power of that charming metal, which commands all things. For, whatever I could have said without that, had been
inlig-

insignificant. But these idolaters melted into an indifference at the first sight of glittering pistoles ; and, when I had once rendered them thus ductile, it was easy to frame them to the most devout appearance of respect and friendship. They promised and swore no hurt should be done me.

But I knew the fickleness of human fidelity better, than to repose any great confidence in these men's words. As soon as they were gone, I conveyed my letters to Eliachim, who could easily conceal them, in any private corner of his house, desiring him to furnish me with some letters of different concerns written in Hebrew, that, if these searchers should come again, and demand a second view of my box, perhaps with design to carry it to some Minister of State, I might have those Hebrew dispatches ready to shew, which, being put in the same box, would not be known from the other by such ignorant fellows, to whom Hebrew, Arabick, and Chinese, were all alike, and so I should be acquitted from all future trouble of this nature.

And this event answered my expectation : For, within three days, the same men came again, with others in their company, pretending they had fresh warrants, and were sworn to be impartial. Wherefore I was forced to attend them, whilst they carried both me and my box before a Cadi, or Judge, who, having examined very strictly concerning my name, country, religion, and other matters, and seeming well satisfied with all my answers, at last sent for a Priest well-versed in the Hebrew tongue ; ordering him to peruse the letters ; which, when he had done, he assured the Cadi, that there was not a word in any of them relating to the State, being purely matters of private contracts, and bargains between merchant-correspondents, with bills of lading, &c. So I had my box of sham-letters restored to me again, and was honourably dismissed.

Yet, though this storm was soon blown over, I was very near running on rocks and sands, through the persecution of thy predecessor Kienan Bassa, and
Kisur

Kisur Dramelec, with many others in the Seraglio : The first keeping from me the pension allowed by the Grand Signior ; the second either sending me no intelligence, or else baffling me with trifling news, nothing to the purpose ; the rest aspersing me to the Ministers of the Divan.

I desire thee to send me the arrears that are behind for the space of nineteen moons, as thou wilt find in the register of the Hafna. Had it not been for Eliachim, that honest Jew, I should have been ruined in this place for want of money.

I need not say more to thee, who knowest that gold is the grand talisman, which works all the miracles in the world.

Paris, 22d of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

The End of the Second Book.

LETTERS

LETTERS

WRIT BY

A SPY AT PARIS.

BOOK III.

LETTER I.

To Dgnet Oglou.

WH O can penetrate into the mysterious conduct of Destiny : Whether God governs this world by the influence of the stars, or by the ministry of spirits, or by his own immediate power ? or whether all things did not proceed from Chance, and are still ruled by the same ? Be it how it will, there remains something adorable. Even that Chance itself, supposing Epicurus's opinion true, is worthy of supreme honours and sacrifices, which has, with such exquisite luck, performed all the parts of infinite wisdom and forecast in forming and preserving the universe. Were I a disciple of that philosopher, every morning when I beheld the rising sun; and at mid-day, when I saw him climb the meridian, and in the evening when he takes his conge of this upper world, to visit our antipodes, would I with profound veneration cry out, ' O eternal Chance ! O omnipotent Casualty ! O incomprehensible

‘henfible Blindness ! I adore thee, I burn incense to thee, and do all things, which the duller fort of mortals think are only due to an all-wise, all-good, and an all-mighty God !’ Thus would I address to that infinite pell-mell of atoms, could I believe with Epicurus, that from such an inconceivable hurly-burly proceeded all this admirable beauty and order which we behold.

Thou wilt perceive by this, that I am religiously disposed ; and, rather than not adore some supreme Being, I would make a Deity of that which to others is the fountain of Atheism. And I think there is reason on my side. For, let this world be produced how it will, whether by the casual concurrence of atoms, or by the deliberate act of an eternal mind ! whether it be eternally self-existent, according to the Stoicks, or be the genuine result of the divine ideas, as the Platonists say ; it is but just that we should pay the most devout and grateful acknowledgments to the source of so many immense prodigies and wonders.

But then, What shall we say for all the Evil that appears in the world ? That there is such a thing as Evil scattered up and down through all the ranks of beings, and as it were blended and rivetted in their very essences, is manifest at first view ; and every man has its share of this epidemical contagion. But, whence it proceeds, who can inform me ? I am not the first that have asked the question. Many years ago, the inquisitive world was busy in searching out the root of Evil. And there were almost as many opinions about it as there were nations on the earth.

Some assert, that all Evil came out of the North : Others derive it from the South ; as if the two poles were the centers, and native seats of this malady of the world. But these seem to be men of short discourse and shallow reason, supinely credulous and willing to take up with any thing, rather than to be at the pains of attentive contemplation.

Yet

Yet this opinion has so far prevailed in these Western parts, that the Nazarene Priests, when they celebrate their mass, stand on the north side of the altar at the reading of the Gospel, turning their back to that quarter of the world. And the reason they give for this ceremony is, because in the written law it is said, 'Out of the North comes all Evil.' I have heard them seriously maintain this argument. But God knows whether there be any such place in the written law, or no; or, if there be, whether it must be taken in this sense. Yet I must confess the Romans have some reason to believe it, having experimentally felt a great deal of evil from the northern Goths and Vandals, who, in former ages, rushed out of their frozen regions, and came down like a torrent upon Italy and other parts of Europe, making havoc of all things civil and sacred. And, if this be the ground of their ceremony, they have greater reason now to change their station, and turn their backs to the South-east, having been much more fatally handled by the victorious Mussulmans.

The ancient Parthians held, that there were two principles or sources of all things, viz. Good and Evil; and that there has been an eternal quarrel between them; but in the end, they say, the Good shall get the victory, and exterminate the Evil: This opinion was embraced by a sect of Christians whom they call Manichees. The founder of that sect was a Persian by birth: His name was Manes, a very learned man, as records of the East testify; yet the Christians rank him among the most pernicious hereticks. He taught, 'that wine was the blood of devils;' and therefore forbade it to his followers. He also prohibited the flesh of animals. This he learned from the Priests of Egypt, where he resided a considerable time.

But, to return to the sentiments of men concerning the origin of Evil. There are some who affirm God is the author of it; which is not far from blasphemy. Others say, that, when the devils were exterminated from the earth, they, in revenge, sowed

the seeds of Evil in the universe. But that of the Stoicks seems the most plausible to me: For they asserted, that nothing is Evil of itself; but that the contrariety which we behold in the world is very good, and conduces to establish the order and œconomy of all things.

My dear Dgnet, do not esteem me an atheist, because of the liberty I take, in discoursing of these mysterious things. There are a sort of people here in the West, whom they call Deists, that is, men professing the belief of a God, Creator of the world, but scepticks in all things else. They have no implicit faith in historical religion, but think it the part of men, as they are endued with reason, to call in question the writings of mortals like themselves, though they had the character of the greatest Prophets. Thus they think it no sin to canvass the books of Moses, and the Hebrew Prophets, the Gospel of Jesus the son of Mary, and the Alcoran of Mahomet, our holy Law-giver; chusing what is agreeable to reason, and rejecting the rest as fabulous, inserted either by the craft of men, or the interloping of the devil.

I protest there appears to me no reason to call these men Atheists or Infidels. They rather seem to deserve the title of Philosophers, or lovers of wisdom and truth. And it is from them I have learned this unwillingness to be imposed on in matters of religion. I find them in all things men of great morality and goodness, far exceeding the zealots of the age in true virtue and pious actions. But they make no noise of what they do, and, whilst only their human frailties are conspicuous to all, their benefactions lie concealed under the veil of an unparalleled modesty.

Such of old were the associates of Zeid Eb'n Raphaa, my countryman. This was a person of an ardent spirit, and prodigious understanding, educated in the Mussulman law: But, when he came to those years, wherein men usually examine the grounds of their religion, he sought the most learned men, and
such

such as were versed in all sciences. After he had conversed some time with them, and found them to be persons of integrity, as well as men of sense, he proposed to them the convenience of frequent clubs among themselves, where they might, with an unrestrained freedom, discourse of all things, and, being united in an inviolable friendship, might improve one another's knowledge and virtue, without regarding the legends and harangues of the Mollahs. This society composed fifty books of so many several kinds of science, that they called them Echwa-nossapha, or the writings of the Sincere Fraternity, concealing their names. They treated of human and divine matters, without reserve or caution; asserting that the Mussulman religion was corrupted and alienated from its first institution, having imbibed many errors; and that there was no way to restore it to its primitive purity, but by joining to it the philosophy of the ancients. In a word, they endeavoured to reform whatever was amiss in the doctrines and manners of the Faithful, by reducing both to the standard of reason.

I know not whether thou wilt approve or dislike their enterprise. But I am sure thou art sensible, as well as I, that there are bigots among the followers of the Prophet, and that those deserve correction. The devil will set his foot in the temple of God: But do not thou follow his steps. If thou do, he that made the devil fetch thee back again.

Paris, 30th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER II.

To the Nazin Eschref, or Prince of the Emirs
at the Porte.

THE Christians say it is an argument of God's love when he chastises them : Therefore they have no reason to be peevish, or call it an effect of his anger, that a dismal plague is broke out in the territories of the Pope, the kingdom of Naples, and other parts of Italy. This contagion rages so vehemently in Rome, the capital city of the Western Nazarenes, that above an hundred thousand persons of several ranks have forsaken the place. The Pope's palace is shut up, and no access granted to any, not even to foreign Ambassadors, without great precaution ; and then none of their retinue are admitted with them.

It is said seventeen hundred die daily in that city, and six thousand a day in Naples. Nay, in some places, the living are scarce sufficient to bury the dead. The Grand Duke of Tuscany, to prevent the spreading of the infection in his territories, has forbid all intercourse between his subjects and those of the Pope, neither will he permit so much as a Nuncio to pass through his dominions.

This mortality has frightened Queen Christina from Rome. She has sent to desire passes of the Duke of Savoy, and other Princes, designing for France. She is already on her voyage, having been presented by the Pope with ten thousand crowns, to defray the expences of her travels. Here are great preparations making for her reception ; the King having sent orders to all the Governors of towns and provinces through which she must pass, to receive and entertain her with a magnificence due to her sovereign dignity, and worthy of the French grandeur and hospitality.

In the mean time, this Court is in a sullen humour, by reason of a late great loss they have suffered at Valenciennes in Flanders. This place was besieged by the French at the beginning of this campaign, but was relieved by the Spaniards this moon, who killed above a thousand men on the spot, and took five thousand prisoners, with all their cannon and baggage. Among the captives of note is the Marshal de Ferto Seneterre, General of the French army. The names of the others are wanting. Marshal de Turenne himself very narrowly escaped by timely withdrawing his brigade from the fight, for which some stigmatise him with cowardice and treachery; whilst others affirm he acted the part of a prudent Captain in thus retreating, since it was impossible to restore the battle with any success.

From Sweden we hear, that the Elector of Brandenburg has entered into a league with the King of Sweden, by which both their armies are united against the King of Poland: And it is said their first design will be upon Dantzick. That country is in a horrid confusion, the Nobles, Gentry, and boors, being all in arms; some deserting their Sovereign, others adhering to his interest. King Casimir has invested Warlaw with an army of forty thousand men. In the mean time, the Hollanders have sent a great fleet of ships of war into the Baltic sea; but to what end is not known, nor what part they will take, whether the Swedes or Poles. Yet, the latter hope for great assistance from them, there having been lately some misunderstanding between the Dutch and the Swedes. The Muscovites also have entered Poland with a numerous army, and the Tartars are coming with another, to the aid of King Casimir.

Thus is Poland become the stage of a most terrible war; and, which side soever gets the victory, that unhappy country will be near ruined.

Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew at Vienna, and a private agent for the Grand Signior, sends me word, that the Emperor of Germany hath an army of

thirty thousand foot and twelve thousand horse in Silesia, who are to join with the Muscovites, and do some considerable action against the Swedes, whose continual victories and growing greatness give jealousy to those puissant Monarchs. He informs me farther, that the Emperor has dispatched a courier to the Prince of Transylvania, with instructions and letters, to engage him to a neutrality.

But the young Ragotski is as wild as his father, and hates to be led by the nose.

Thou mayest inform the Ministers of the Divan, that Adonai the Jew is dead of the plague in Rome, having first taken care to transmit to me all the papers which concern the mysterious Porte.

This Court, at present, is at a place called La Fere in Picardy; a province bordering on Flanders. From whence there may be a more frequent intercourse between the King and his camp.

Prince of the holy line, I have sent thee all the news that is stirring at this juncture, saving some trivial matters which are not worth a Mussulman's knowledge, much less thine, who art distinguished from the croud of True Believers, by wearing the sacred colour of the Prophet.

Paris, 30th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER III.

To Melec Amet.

HERE has been a strange accident lately, not many leagues from Paris, which has occasioned various discourses, and put the philosophers upon a new scrutiny. One morning a certain peasant or farmer, walking over his lands, as his custom is, to number his sheep, and other cattle, missed a barn, or store-house, which stood in a field at
some

some distance from his habitation. Surprised at this, he hastened toward the place where he saw it but the night before: When, to his no small astonishment, he perceived, that, not only the barn, but a great part of the field wherein it was built, was sunk into the earth. He immediately ran and called some of his near neighbours, to behold this strange spectacle: And the fame of it spread all over the country. Divers learned and ingenious persons have been there, to make observations of this accident. But none dares venture near enough to the chasm, to look down into it; because the earth continues breaking and falling in, which makes a noise like the salvo's of the Janizaries, when the Grand Signior visits the arsenal.

One would conclude by these uncommon symptoms, that the earth grows ancient and weak, that her inward strength and vigour decays, and that we are every-where in danger of being swallowed up. I have not time to write more, it being midnight, and the post ready to go.

The Almighty and All-good God have thee in his holy protection.

Paris, 30th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER IV.

To Zornezan Mustapha, Beglerbeg of Erzram.

I Will still congratulate thy happiness even in this last change of thy fortune; which, though it be a kind of descent from the more lofty stations thou hast possessed in the Osman empire, yet it is attended with honourable circumstances and an inviolable security. Thou art not out of the Sultan's favour, banished to Egypt, and confined to a narrow pension during thy life, as has been the fate of several gran-

dees : But thou art withdrawn from the intrigues of state, the toils of war, and the plots of a courtier's life, to the sweet retirements of the country, the peaceable possession of a rich and fertile province, where thou mayest pass thy days in an uncontrollable ease and felicity.

I am not surpris'd at the fall of so many great men at the Porte, nor do I much regret the death of those who were known enemies to the government : Yet it troubles me to think how the brave and the loyal had their innocent blood mingled with that of traitors and villains. But these things are unavoidable in popular insurrections, where the Sovereign is compelled to sacrifice to the multitude whomsoever they require. Thus fell the illustrious Solyman, among the criminal eunuchs, though he himself was free from stain : But he was a negro, and that was his ruin ; for the malecontents could not discern the fair qualities of his soul.

Curse on the fool Chaban Kalfa, and double curses on his rampant wife Mulkly Kadin, who gave the first occasion to all this disorder and spoil of noble blood. I remember the honest Solyman gave me once a hint of the feminine debaucheries practis'd in the Queen-mother's apartment : But he spoke of it with so much modesty and reserve, that it hardly made any impression on me at that time : Otherwise I should have imparted it to the Vizir Azem, or some other Minister of the Divan ; for so am I commanded, in cases that touch the honour and safety of the Grand Signior. And I tell thee this was none of the least importance. For, as it appears, the women were undermining the most sacred and firmly established government in the world : They were not contented to wallow in their own impious and unnatural delights, but would have set themselves as a pattern to others, and, by degrees, have infected the whole Mussulman empire with a new species of debauchery : Which, as it began and was carried on by embezzling the royal treasures, selling of places to men of no merit, buffoons, pimps,

pimps, and asses; so it would have ended in enervating our militia, corrupting all the Faithful, and laying the empire naked to Infidels.

How many Vizirs, Chaimachams, Captain Bassa's, and other Officers have we had killed this fatal year? Among the rest I cannot but reflect on the poisoning of the Chiaux Bassa, after he was made Vizir Azem, as a stroke of divine justice, for having embued his hands in so much noble blood, when he enjoyed that dignity once before. God pursues the cruel with invincible scourges.

But what was that Achmet Bassa, who took advantage of the Sultan's domestick troubles, and foreign wars, to disturb his government in Asia, and raised a rebellion, which threatened even the imperial city itself? By the course of his fortune, it looks as if he were not contented with his command in Asia, and therefore took this new celebrated method, to obtain a higher dignity, viz. by rebelling against his master: Else, why was he made Bassa of the sea, in the room of Ourcos Kienan? The Bassa of Aleppo first brought into fashion this daring way of growing great. And, if it be thus countenanced by the Grand Signior, in all probability, he will have reason to make peace with the Christians, that he may have respite and force to employ against his own subjects.

Amidst all these things nothing afflicts me so much, as the horrible loss our fleet has sustained at sea. We have various reports of this combat; but, in general, they agree, that the Mussulmans have lost seventy-two ships and galleys, with an infinite number of men; that the Venetians have taken the isles of Tenedos and Lemnos, and that they are advancing to besiege Constantinople. This news is a great while in coming to us: So that, if it be true, and the Venetians pursued their victory, for aught I know, by this time the imperial city, the refuge of the world, may be laid in ashes.

I have often proposed the necessity of platforms along the Hellespont, to guard that important ave-

nue of the Sacred Porte. Had they put in practice Mahmut's advice, perhaps the Nazatenes would have had no occasions for their present triumphs. But now they banquet in the open streets: All Christendom rings with the news of our disgrace. The drunkards of Europe insult over the professors of sobriety: Amidst their bowls of wine, they blaspheme our Prophet, and sing in the praise of Bacchus their God. They menace the conquest of Asia, and threaten to exterminate the Mussulmans from the earth.

Inraged at these prophane boasts, I stop my ears, and, turning round in a divine phrensy, I pray that God would baffle the Infidels.

Paris, 6th of the 9th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER V.

To the most Renowned and most Illustrious
Mahomet, Vizir Azem, at the Porte.

THAT incomprehensible Majesty which has no resemblance, at whose pleasure all things are disposed and ordered in heaven and earth, by whose particular providence, for the good of the Osman empire, thou art exalted to the glorious trust to be the Vicar of the Vicar of God; augment thy graces and virtues, and bless thee with superlative wisdom and perfect tranquillity.

I revere thy accomplished soul, consummate in all moral and political science. Thou art the most experienced man in the empire. And I ceased to condole the late tumults and riots at Constantinople, though their effects were fatal to some brave men, since thou art chosen to this dignity, from whom the whole empire may expect, not only a serener state of affairs during thy administration, but also a
rooting

resting up of the causes of these publick distempers, and of all other evils which infect the monarchy designed for the conquest and reformation of the whole world.

According to the custom of the East, I approach thee not without some present : But pardon the slave Mahmut, who can send thee none worthy of thy grandeur. I have inclosed in a box the true effigies of the present King of France, with that of his uncle the Duke of Orleans, his brother the Duke of Anjou, and his cousin the Prince of Conde ; as also that of Cardinal Mazarine, and Queen Christina of Sweden, who is now at the French Court. Accept also from an exile a little cabinet, containing twelve watches, of so many different contrivances, according to the circular variation of the moon, in the space of thirty-four years. They are the work of my own hands, therefore I shall not commend them. Each is wrapped up in a piece of silk, wherein is wrought, in Arabick letters, the method of using it. Perhaps thou wilt find some diversion in trying the experiments mentioned in those tables. However, despise not this mean testimony of Mahmut's respect, but consider, that, if I come short of the curious artists in Europe, yet my labour is passable enough for a Mussulman, among whom there is scarce another watchmaker to be found in the world.

If thou wouldst know the occasion of Queen Christina's being at the French Court ; she came thither from Rome when the last moon was in the wane. Her passage was by sea to Marseilles, having touched at Genoa, and received magnificent gifts from the Republick ; but they would not permit her to land, for fear of the plague, which then raged in Rome, and was the cause of her leaving that city.

However, the French shewed no such timorous squeamishness, but received her and her train with open arms. She landed at Marseilles on the 29th of the seventh moon ; and, when she made her pub-

lick entry, the Consuls of that city, with all the Nobles, met her in coaches, the great guns were discharged to welcome her, and she was carested with all the demonstrations of honour that are shewed to the Queen of France herself, in her progresses.

The same entertainment she received at Aix, Avignon, Lyons, and, in fine, all along the road to Paris, the keys of the towns being surrendered to her (for such was the King's pleasure) and a canopy of state borne over her head, when she entered any town, and received the addresses and compliments of Governors, Prelates, and other great men in authority. She was likewise magnificently treated by Princes, and the chief Dukes of the realm : And, on the 8th of the last moon, made her entry into this city on horseback, apparelled like a man : Where having staid some time, she departed for Compeigne, to visit the Court, which resides there now.

It is not supposed she will tarry long in France, but, as soon as she hears the plague is abated in Rome and the adjacent parts, she will return thither, to pass away the residue of her life, in that nest of Princes and Prelates of the Nazarene Belief.

A little before she left Rome, the Spaniards there had conspired to seize on her person, as also on the Pope ; to have murdered the Portugal Ambassador, and set the city on fire. But the plot was discovered, and conspirators put in prison : For the sentence of death is never passed in criminal cases, among the Nazarenes, without a formal trial.

Here is a rumour, as if a great fire had, some moons ago, broke out in Constantinople, and consumed much of that city. I wonder none of my friends, nor any other residing there, have sent me an account of any such thing ; which fills me with hopes that this report is false.

From all hands we are assured, that the Swedes and Brandenburghers have obtained a great victory over the Poles and Tartars at Warsaw ; the vanquished having lost above six thousand on the spot, with

with all their ammunition and baggage: And unfortunate King Casimir was forced to fly, with a small retinue, towards Hungary.

It was the general expectation of Europe, that the Muscovites and Germans would have done something extraordinary for the Poles, and by some surprising action put a check to the Swedish successes and triumphs. For, when the Muscovite Ambassador was at Königsburg, endeavouring to withdraw the Duke of Brandenburg from the Swedes' interests, he vomited forth terrible menaces, in case they complied not with his Master's proposals. And one day, in a furious zeal, he took a large goblet of wine, in the Elector's presence, and, having drank it off to the Czar's health, the Barbarian said aloud, 'Thus shall the great Emperor of the Muscovites devour all that oppose him.' But now it seems these were all empty bravadoes, and the Muscovites were resolved to stand by, and see who got the better. The same may be said of the Emperor and Prince of Transylvania, also of the Danes and Hollanders, who now all declare for the strongest party.

Magnanimous Vizir, if the present engagements and wars in Dalmatia and Candy, besides the domestic troubles of the Ottoman empire, did not wholly employ the arms of the Mussulmans, doubtless it would be an undertaking no less profitable than glorious to succour the distressed Casimirs, turn the tide of the Gothick conquests, and oblige the Poles to an eternal fidelity and gratitude to the Grand Signior.

Paris, 14th of the 10th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

L E T.

LETTER VI.

To Abraham Eli, Zeid Hogia, Preacher to the Seraglio.

I HAVE frequent access to the King's Library, which favour was first granted me by Cardinal Richlieu, who often employed me in translating some curious treatises out of Arabick into French or Latin. The French seem very fond of Eastern manuscripts, wherever they can meet with them; And they have no less regard for men who are skilled in those languages. That Minister especially was very inquisitive into the wisdom and learning of Asia; He monopolised Persian, Syrian, and Arabick books, and was a professed patron of linguists. He coveted the acquaintance of strangers and travellers, that he might, by their means, inform himself of the different laws, customs, and religions of foreign countries, and of whatsoever was rare and worthy of observation in any part of the world.

Hence it was, that I received evident marks of his esteem, as soon as he knew that I understood the Greek, Arabick, Hebrew, Turkish, and Slavonian languages. He often made use of me, as I have said, and gave me free access to his own and the King's Library. And though his successor, Cardinal Mazarine, is not so much addicted to studies of this nature as to the affairs of state; yet he has continued to me the privilege of visiting this treasury of learned books, where I pass many hours.

One day I cast my eyes on a manuscript written in Arabick, and indorsed with this title:

[The Original Covenant of Mahomet, the Prophet of the Arabians, with the Professors of the Faith of Jesus.]

and

and underneath was a Latin inscription, signifying, that this manuscript was found in the convent of Christian Friars on Mount Carmel. I have transcribed the contents of this parchment, and sent it inclosed to thee, that thou mayest judge whether it be real, or only counterfeit. For the Nazarenes assert it to be the 'true agreement of the Messenger of God,' and therefore reproach all the Mussulmans with disobedience to our Lawgiver, and breaking the league signed and sealed by him, whom we call the seal of the Prophets, and witnessed by the four principal Doctors, Abu Becree, Osman, Omar, and Hali.

If thou wilt peruse the inclosed paper, it will be easy to discern, whether we are guilty of this violation of faith, or they. For though, supposing this to be the real testament of the Prophet, as is pretended, that favourite of Heaven grants many articles of peace, assistance, and friendship, to the followers of Jesus, with immunity from taxes and impositions, liberty of conscience, freedom of marriages, &c. Yet it is evident, that he promised not these things, but on certain conditions to be observed on the part of the Christians; as, that none of them should harbour or hold correspondence with the enemies of the True Believers, or privately accommodate them with arms, horses, money, or any other necessaries of war: But, on the contrary, should hospitably receive the Mussulmans into their houses for three days, and protect them from their enemies. If, therefore, the Christians should fail in any of these points, the Prophet declares his covenant to be void, and that they shall not enjoy the indulgences granted therein. All this, thou wilt see, is recommended solemnly to both parties to be religiously performed till the final consummation.

Now, all the dispute is, whether we have first transgressed the articles, or the Nazarenes? For, if it can be proved, that they are the first aggressors, then they have no reason to complain of their Misfortunes, or accuse the True Faithful of oppression

and

and tyranny, as they commonly do: Since it is manifest, that they have drawn these evils on themselves, by their breach of faith and infidelity, disannulling the covenant of God and his Prophet, and forfeiting the benefit they might have claimed by virtue of it. Be it how it will, the Prophet is free from blame: Let the guilt rest on the persons that were criminal.

I know not how it comes to pass that the Christians of this age think and speak more reproachfully of our holy Lawgiver, than did their fathers, who lived in his time, or immediately after it, and who, by consequence, could better inform themselves of the circumstances of his birth, life, and renowned actions. Some ancient writers among the Nazarenes make honourable mention of him and his family. They conceal not the early signs of his heroick virtue, and the grandeur to which he was destined. I have read in a certain Christian author, that, when the Prophet was but nine years old, under the tuition of his uncle Abu Taleb, who carried his glorious charge along with him to Damascus, and that whilst they were at Boz'r, a learned monk whose name was Bohira, came out of the convent to meet them; and, taking Mahomet by the hand, in the presence of many Christians, he said aloud, 'This youth is born to accomplish great things: His fame shall be spread from East to West: For, as he drew near to this place I saw a bright cloud descend and cover him.' Sultan David also prophesied of him, in that which the Christians reckon the 50th psalm, and the 2d verse; Where that divine Poet thus sings, 'From Sion God hath proclaimed the empire of Mahomet.' But the Christians have interpreted this in another sense, though the original remains a standing witness against them. So Moses, in the Pentateuch, uttered a mystery when he said, 'God came from Sinai, he rose up from Seir, and was manifested from Mount Paran.' Intimating hereby the descent of the written law to Moses, of the Gospel to Jesus the son

son of Mary, and of the Alcoran to Mahomet. The Meffias also said to his disciples, 'If I go not away, the Called of God will not come to you.' But the Christian interpreters wilfully hide these things from the vulgar, lest their eyes should be opened. There appears an obstinate malice and ignorance in all their actions.

Who will not laugh at the foolish spite of the Spaniards? who, in a certain town, had a custom, as oft as they entered into the church, or came out, to spit on a black image of a man sitting on an ass near the gate. But a Mussulman Ambassador, coming thither from the Emperor of Morocco, and observing this vain ceremony of the people, asked the King, 'What person that statue represented?' He made answer, 'That it was the image of Mahomet, the Arabian Prophet.' 'That cannot be,' replied the Ambassador, 'since our Prophet never rode but on camels: It is rather the figure of the Meffias, who indeed is recorded to have rode on an ass.' The King, troubled at this answer, consulted the Priests and learned men, who all concluded, that the Ambassador had spoke the truth. And therefore, instead of offering any more indignities to this image, they fell into another extreme, and built a chapel for it, burning incense to the senseless stock; and paying it divine honours. Thus they prayed to that which but a little before they had cursed; and turned into a god that which they had esteemed almost as bad as the devil. God's curse be on the devil and all his adorers: But on the holy Prophet and all his followers may blessings shower down, and rest till the knot of the sphere is dissolved.

Paris, 14th of the 11th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LETTER VII.

To Murat, Bassa.

K NOW for certain, that Don Juan de Braganza, late King of Portugal, is dead. He left this world on the 6th of the last moon, after he had been tormented ten days with the stone: His Queen has the supreme power in her hands during her son's minority, whose name is Don Alphonso. This young Prince was crowned within a few days after his father's decease, to prevent the plots of the Spaniards, who support a powerful faction in the kingdom of Portugal, and are not without hopes to reduce it again to the King of Spain's obedience. The world is always busy, either in recovering old lost interest, or seeking of new.

The Marshal de la Ferte, who was taken prisoner by the Prince of Conde in the battle of Valenciennes, and, having a price set for his ransom, had liberty to go whither he would on his parole, either to bring the said sum, or surrender his person by a certain day; finding himself slighted at the French Court, is resolved to perform his promise at the prefixed time, and go over to the Prince of Conde's interest, who will not fail to bestow a very honourable command on a General of such merits.

In the mean time, the Count of Harcourt plays tricks with his Master, and holds private correspondence with the German Emperor. He is a serviceable or a dangerous man, according as he is pleased or disgusted, and therefore they court him on both sides. He is now at Brisac in Alsace. I cannot admire a man that is thus industriously troublesome to his Prince, without any thing of merit or bravery to boast of, save his former services in Catalonia, which have been sufficiently repaid with royal condescensions and favours. And those who make a parallel between his case and that of the Marshal
de

de la Ferte Seneterre, consider not that the last fell into his enemies hands only by the chance of war : Whereas the other is a wilful apostate, if he embraces the Emperor's proposals, when no necessity constrains him, and honour flies in his face.

From the North we are informed, that Count Coningsmark, Generalissimo of the Swedish forces in Prussia, as he was sailing from Wismar, was taken captive by the Poles, and imprisoned in the castle of Wessel-munden near Dantzick. And the inhabitants of that city missed very narrowly of taking the Queen of Sweden herself. It is certain they have got a vast booty from the Swedes ; consisting of eighteen chests full of gold, with coffers of the King's jewels, and other rich things.

These King Casimir demands for himself, with a million of rix-dollars, to be paid him by the Dantzickers ; requiring also, that they should furnish his army with all sorts of ammunition and provisions : Which, though it be a heavy burthen, yet those loyal citizens think nothing too much for their King.

The Muscovites, in the 9th moon, besieged Riga, a city belonging to the Crown of Sweden, but have newly raised the siege, after they had lost above ten thousand men before the place.

This is all the news I can send thee, save that the French have taken Valencia, a city in Italy.

I wish I may hear as prosperous intelligence as this last from Candia, after such immense charges and slaughter : But victory is in the disposal of the angel of time.

Paris, 2d of the 12th Moon,
of the Year 1656.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

To Hebatolla Mir Argun, Superior of the
Convent of Dervises at Cogni in Natolia.

IT is difficult to define the particular temper of my soul, when I first received the news of thy predecessor's death, that renowned and venerable Bedredin, who, as thy dispatch informs me, is gone to Paradise. I was neither in passion, nor yet insensible, but wholly resigned to the will of Heaven. I considered his immense virtues and the course of nature: His wonderful age, and more admirable actions, a life equally measured by hours and prodigies of piety: For he was not in the number of those who let whole days pass away without the least good work, or without leaving any impress on the track of time. I express myself according to the vulgar saying [Time passes away:] Whereas, in my opinion, time stands still, and only we pass away, with all things subject to motion and change. It is like the mistake of those, who, sailing on the water, think the trees and mountains move, whilst only they themselves are driven before the wind; or like the philosophy of those, who, trusting to their grosser sense, maintain the sun whirls round our world, though, according to reason and better philosophy, that globe of light stands still, whilst ours turns round its axle-tree, and so deceives our eyes. Thus, whilst we mortals glide over the uncertain waves of human life, and pass by the visible and fixed land-marks of time, day and night, we imagine those land-marks move, and not we ourselves: Whereas day and night remain for ever steadfast and invariable in their successive intervals, and only the elements and bodies compounded of them are subject to change.

Minutes, hours, days, and years are not properly the measures of time, but of the motion and duration

tion of all corruptible beings : For time is infinite, and beyond all dimensions. In a word, it is no otherwise distinguished from eternity, than barely by a name.

All that I have said on this subject is comprehended in the Arabian proverb, which says, ' To-morrow is never.' Doubtless there is no paradox or heresy in saying, ' It is always to-day : ' Or that this hour, this minute, is eternal. And from this truth sprung the contemplation of those who place eternity in a point or instant.

But to return to Bedredin, that Faithful of the Faithful, may his soul repose in the mercies of God, and his memory be blessed. May Gabriel, the friend of the Prophet, pray for him ; then Michael, Isra- phiel, and the messenger of death, with all the angels who made oraisons for the divine favourite, after his translation from this earthly state. And when thou, and the religious fraternity under thy care, have performed the accustomed prayers and expiations for the illustrious prelate deceased, there is no question but that he shall be in a condition to intercede for you and for the whole Mussulman empire, for he was a perfect Saint, and the beloved of God.

O sage and reverend successor of that holy man, suffer me to tell thee thy name Hebatolla [the gift of God] fills me with glorious presages of thy life and administration in that renowned college, where the incomparable Bedredin shined so many years. Now he is gone to God, and to the gardens of eternal retirement, having left his seat on earth to thee, replenished with the sacred odour of virtue.

He was a religious imitator of the Prophets, and of all holy men in general ; a devout admirer of the Messias, and a faithful disciple of the Sent of God. Now he is gone to sit down with them in the chioses of Eden, on the banks of immortal streams, and rivers of wine, milk, and honey, which glide along the alleys of Paradise. This is the recompence of heroick virtue, the crown of good works, the bliss prepared

prepared for chaste and purified souls, who, in their transmigration from this earth, carry no stains of vice along with them : For nothing impure can find admittance into that world of glittering essence.

O Hebatolla, what is there on this obscure globe that deserves to be compared with those serener joys above, those unfulled pleasures, that untarnished blifs? And yet sometimes we taste strange felicities here on earth. But it is only when the gates and casements of Paradise are open, when a celestial wind transports hither the leaves of the trees of Eden, and perfumes the air and sky with the transcendent odour of that happy region, wafting also imperfect sounds, musick in soft fragments, and echoes from the choirs of the blessed. Then it is the hearts of mortals feel a secret and inexpressible joy springing up from the root ; this lower world (if I may so express myself) is all intrenched with pleasure. This happens not every day, but only at the seasons of divine indulgence, on the festivals of some particular Saints, and in the time of the immortal jubilee, when God exhilarates the universe with uncommon favours and an infinite largess.

As for the rest of our enjoyments, they are mitigations indeed of the pains and inseparable miseries of this mortal life ; they prevail on us to wait the appointed hour of fate, and not hurry ourselves out of the world before our time : But they deserve not to be placed in the rank of true felicities.

However, our patience under this fatigue of life, our indifference to pleasure and pain, poverty or riches, sickness or health, honour or disgrace, with all the other objects of human passion, will prove a singular argument of merit, a prevailing recommendation to the life to come, and an effectual passport for Paradise. For he that is thus insensibly, yet willingly weaned from the fulsome joys of earth by the very course of nature and decree of destiny, must unavoidably ascend to a purer region, to a place capable of satisfying his aspiring soul : For nature created no appetite to baulk it.

This

This is the life so recommended by Jesus the son of Mary, whose character thou hast in the library of thy convent. Here I send thee in a box that which by all the Nazarenes is esteemed his true effigies. I remember I once saw another of the same lineaments in the treasury of the Grand Signior. These pieces are very rare, because not copied by the hands of common painters, but by the most celebrated masters in Europe. And the original draught, they say, was made by the Messias himself on a handkerchief, which he clapped on his face, and left his lively portraiture.

I cannot ascertain the truth of this tradition: but, in regard this is one of those copies which are closetted by the greatest Monarchs in Christendom, I send it to thee as a worthy ornament of thy cell, without either the peril or scandal of idolatry.

The pious Bedredin was covetous of any memoirs of the Messias, whether written in hieroglyphicks, or in the more usual characters of speech. He would have made no more exception at a picture, than at a poem in praise of the holy Prophet; and I question not but thou equallest him in the same indifference.

I could not easily procure the true picture of John, surnamed the Washer; but here I will give thee a short history of his life. This was a famous Prophet, who lived in the days of the Messias, and of the race of the Priests. His habitation was altogether in the desert, for he was an Eremite, and lived in a cave on one of the mountains of Judæa: Some of the Jews took him for Elias, others for the Messias, and a third sort said he was Mahomet, whose coming was foretold in the book of their law, and in the writings of their Prophets.

But John denied that he was any of those, calling himself, in modesty, a voice or echo. His life was very abstemious; for he fed only on the tops of plants and wild honey, drinking nothing but water of the fountains which ran by the side of his cave;
and

and his body was only covered with a vest of camel's hair, using a leathern thong for a girdle.

To that solitary residence of his there was great resort of people from Jerusalem and the cities round about; for the fame of his sanctity had spread through all Palestine and Syria.

He washed all his disciples with his own hands in the waters of Jordan, from whence he was called the Baptist or Washer. He daily preached repentance and good works to the incredulous Jews; and openly declared, that Jesus the son of Mary was the Messias. That holy Prophet, it seems, was one of John's disciples, and had been washed by him in the river Jordan.

In fine, after many years of heroick virtue and piety, John had his head cut off by the order of Herod the Governor of Judæa, because he had reprov'd the tyrant for marrying his brother's wife.

Behold these memoirs are the best presents the poor exiled Mahmut can send thee, when he congratulates thy accession to that holy chair: Yet such as these were more welcome to thy predecessor than gifts of silver, gold, or precious stones; for he was a diligent collector of choice antiquities and select fragments of history: He was also a liberal patron and encourager of philosophy and all sorts of learning. Follow thou his example, and the true Faithful will be eternally obliged to thee. Thou hast a fair opportunity, there being, as I am informed, the best library in thy convent of any throughout the Mussulman empire: And the Dervises under thy government are men addicted to the study of the sciences. It is pity such inclinations should want encouragement, whilst the Infidels are every-where so busy in founding new academies, and augmenting the old. There is one lately erecting in the dukedom of Cleve, by the Elector of Brandenburg, where the Oriental language and sciences are professed. If the Nazarenes are thus curious to pry into our learning, why should we be remiss in attaining the knowledge of their languages and histories,
since

since thereby we shall be in a condition to know the greatest secrets?

Sage Hebatolla, let not the Infidels have any longer occasion to term us barbarous and ignorant: But remember, that, in promoting literature, thou wilt perform a meritorious service to the Grand Signior.

Paris, 17th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER IX.

To Selim AP Mosel, Venerable Imaum of
the Mosque of Sancta Sophia.

PR AISE be to God, sole Lord of the Zenith and the Nadir, possessor of infinite regions, who hides the first meridian in the palm of his hand! The names of Peru and Mexico are not now foreign in the Ottoman empire, especially to travellers and men of science.

When our fathers first heard of America, they had no other way to express so unknown a part of the world, than by calling it the land of the Golden Mines, because of the abundance of that metal which was brought from thence by the Spaniards, since their conquest in those parts. But now we are no strangers to the geography of that remote continent. Commerce and traffick have rendered all the known nations of the earth familiar with one another. And I remember, when I was at Constantinople, the names of Peru, Mexico, Florida, &c. were as common in the Copha Hans, as the names of Indostan, Turquistan, Gurgistan, or any other provinces of Asia. So that a man would have been laughed at, who, in speaking of America, should have used any circumlocutions, as to call it the Empire of the Golden Mines, the World beyond the Great Sea, or the like.

Yet we must confess our knowledge in this kind is owing to the Franks, who sail into those far distant regions, and at their return communicate their intelligence and observations to us ; for else we had been altogether strangers to the history of that New World.

It was first discovered by Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, in the year 1492 of the Christians Hægira. This man had a happy genius in contemplating the motion of the sun, and the frame of the universe. He was no stranger to the extent of our continent, and the situation of all its parts : He had been often at sea, and seen divers regions ; and particularly when he was in Portugal, the most Westernly part of Europe, he took great delight to walk on the shore in the evenings, and observe the setting of the sun. This custom of his produced various thoughts in his breast, but, what was of most import, his reason suggested to him, that it could not consist with the order of nature, that the sun, after he left our world, served only to give light to the fishes, or gild the waves of the Western ocean : Therefore, on good grounds, he concluded there must be some unknown land, beyond these mighty tracts of sea, which washed the Western shores of Europe and Africk.

This thought made him uneasy, and put him upon a resolution of attempting a discovery. He made proposals to the republick of Genoa, but was rejected. Then he addressed himself to Henry VII. at the English Court, where, not finding encouragement, he went to the King of Spain, who, approving his design, furnished him with two ships. He sailed on the ocean for the space of two moons without seeing any land, which made his mariners mutiny, their provision falling short. They threatened to throw him overboard, if he would not return. But he, with mild words and strong reasons, appeased their fury ; promising to sail back again, if they saw not land within three days. On the third day, the boy on the main-topmast saw a fire, and,
within

within a few hours afterwards, they came within view of land.

When he had made his observations, and done what was requisite in his circumstances, he returned to give the King of Spain an account of his expedition.

After his death, Americus Vesputius was sent to conquer the unknown regions; from whom that whole continent is called America; but, methinks, not without some ingratitude to the first discoverer.

It would be endless to recount all the particular adventures of the Spaniards in these parts, with their cruelties and massacres: Suffice it to say, to the eternal infamy of that nation, that, according to their own writers, they butchered in cold blood above twenty millions of the natives, in the space of twenty years: And all this for the lucre of their gold, though under the pretence of propagating the Christian religion.

I will not list myself in the number of those who pretend to be God's Privy-counsellors, neither will I presume to descant on things out of my reach: But the Spaniards have lately felt a terrible blow in Peru; which, if it be not a mark of the wrath of Heaven, is at least a sign that the earth is weary of them, especially in those parts where they have stained it with so much innocent blood.

The city Lima, not many moons ago, was all swallowed up by an earthquake; and Calao, another city not far from it, was consumed by a shower of fire out of the clouds. Eleven thousand Spaniards lost their lives in this calamity; and the earth devoured a hundred millions of refined silver, which the lucre of the Spaniards had forced out of its bowels. All the mountains of Potosi, from whence they dug their choicest metal, were levelled with the plain, and no more hopes of gold were left to their insatiable avarice.

I leave the judgment of these events to thee, who art of the holy line, full of resplendent thoughts, prophetick Hcharif, consecrated Emir, glory of the

house of Mahomet. Yet give me leave to tell thee, that this calamity of the Spaniards in part resembles the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the rest of the nine cities in the lake. The Infidels say there were but five. Let them alone in their error ; it is certain the Mussulmans have the only true history of former times. Doubtless, God is severe in chastisements, when he is incensed against a nation. Witness the People of Aod and Themod, with the men of the Valley of Smoke, and the city whose inhabitants were in one hour all turned into statues of stone, and are to be seen at this day, as a standing monument of Heaven's displeasure. Yet no nation is ruined till it ruin itself, as God speaks in the Alcoran.

O Emir, in whose veins run the most purified blood in the world, pray for Mahmut, that he may never turn apostate from God and his Prophet, nor do any thing which may hurry him to an untimely fate.

Paris, 17th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER X.

To Mustapha, Bassa.

THIS following summer, if all reports be true, is like to afford some campaigns of blood. The general discourse here is, that the Grand Signior will speedily have an army of three hundred thousand men in the field ; part to act in Dalmatia and Candy against the Venetians : the rest to be employed against the Persians, the more inveterate enemies of the Ottoman empire.

That saucy ambassador, Ishmael Bir Couli Can, deserved the punishment was inflicted on him for his impertinent huff, and drawing his sabre in the presence

presence of the greatest Monarch of the world. And let it be an eternal precedent to the envoys of foreign Princes, that they may learn a lesson of modesty, when they address the Lord of their Lords, and not, by presumption, incense the King of the earth.

But it is apparent this Ambassador took advantage of our troubles : He swelled with a vain and false idea of the Persian puissance : Besides, they say his Master has entered into a solemn league with the Czar of Muscovy against the shining empire. And it is certainly known here, that two Ambassadors are arrived at Venice from that potent Emperor of the North ; and others are expected from Persia to negotiate a tripartite league between those crowns and that republick against the victorious Osmons. Hence I suppose it was, that the rude heretick took the boldness to commit an action, which all the East punishes with death. Neither is it any thing to the purpose what the Christians of these parts say, ' That the persons of Ambassadors are sacred : ' For much more so are the persons of Sovereigns.' And so long as an Envoy obeys the law of nations, in only delivering his message with respect and civility, that law will protect him from all injuries : But if he must needs leap over his own fence, and, instead of appearing like an Ambassador, he will act the part of an assassin, a Furioso, a contemner of majesty, he can expect no better treatment than what is due to his audacious insolence : He throws off with scorn the protection that his character claims, and, in a mad bravado, courts the revenge of the State.

This Ishmael had all along been counted a bold fool in the Court of Persia. He has committed a thousand wild pranks at Ispahan, more becoming a Jester, than a wise Minister of State. Yet his Master still winked at his extravagances for his father's sake, who did many notable services to that Crown ; among which, his recovering Candahar from the

Mogul was none of the least ; it being the only town which commands the frontiers of Persia and the Indies.

For this and other merits, Sha Sophi preferred both him and his son to the most considerable governments and offices in the empire ; wherein the old man acquitted himself fairly to the last. But this young buffoon grew unwieldy with too much honour, affronted the Grandees, and played upon the King himself, for which he had once like to have been cast to the dogs. But, at the intercession of some of his few friends, that punishment was remitted, and changed into exile ; whilst his enemies made use of his absence to ruin him.

They were some of the greatest Lords of the Court who bore him a grudge, and they had hourly the King's ear ; which advantage they made use of to insinuate such an ill character of Ishmael, that he knew no better way to be handsomely rid of him, than by sending him on this desperate embassy to the mysterious Porte : Chusing rather that he should fall by the Grand Signior's command, than by his own, who had reaped so much benefit from the services of his father.

By this thou mayest discern, that the King of Persia is earnestly resolved on war, without regarding how his herald that proclaimed it is received : For that Ambassador deserves no other title, who comes not with the accustomed presents and supplication ; but with an address of a harsher style, denouncing enmity at his very first approach to the feet of the invincible Sultan Mahomet.

After all, it rejoices me to hear, that thou, and the other Bassa's of the empire, are so ready to assist our great Master. For I am assured that, from your personal and voluntary contributions, he has received a supply of thirty millions of aspers, besides the constant revenues, customs, tributes, and subsidies of the empire. This is noised all over Christendom ; yet the Venetians seem not much to dread the consequences of those vast preparations, judging that

that they will be employed elsewhere than against any province of their dominions, except in Dalmatia, where these Infidels trust to the strength of their forts, and the inaccessible height of rocks.

But He that laid the foundations of the earth, and causes it to tremble when he pleases; the same God formed the lofty mountains; and can level them with plains to serve the followers of his Prophet: Even as the stones came voluntarily to salute the divine messenger himself; the trees roused themselves as out of a deep sleep, and, the earth yielding on all sides to the forcible motion of the inspired roots, they walked out of the places, and composed an umbrella over the head of Mahomet, when he was ready to faint with the violent heat of the sun.

Thus shall the elements conspire to aid the True Believers: And, when they fight for the Alcoran against Infidels, God shall endue the inanimate beings with faith and devotion.

Paris, 7th of the 2d Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XI.

To Mehemet, an exiled Eunuch, in Egypt.

PRepare thyself with a constancy of spirit becoming a Mussulman, when thou shalt understand that the best friend thou hast in the world is gone to Paradise. May God grant him the repose of a True Believer, an apartment of singular delight. For it is the brave Solyman I speak of, who not only deserves thy most grateful vows for saving thy life, but has done a thousand meritorious actions besides, which now crown him with chaplets of immortality.

I wish I could have been the relater of better news to my banished friend. But, perhaps, thou hast

heard of his death already by some vessels from Constantinople, and it will be needless to say any thing as to his untimely fate, or the tragedies of the Seraglio and Imperial City.

It seems very strange to me, and a thing unaccountable, that there can be no means found out to prevent these dangerous insurrections of the soldiers, and that the most formidable empire on earth should be thus frequently shocked by her own subjects! Mehemet, the things of this present world are a perfect riddle, and our life itself is but the shadow of a dream. Thou hast experienced the inconstancy of fortune, and that there is nothing on earth deserves a wise man's confidence: Therefore, if I may advise thee, it shall be to wean thyself from the trivial affairs of mortals. Let not the natural fondness, which thou mayest possibly have for thy former courtly life of the Seraglio, return to disquiet thy soul. A man may be happy any where, that knows how to be contented. Nature is served with a little; and we ought to esteem our irregular appetites as foreigners. If our fortune be not extended to the larger measure of our wishes, it is easy to contract and adequate our minds to our fortune.

Thou mayest carve to thyself various sorts of felicities in Egypt, and render Cairo as pleasant to thee now, as Constantinople was formerly. Virtue makes all places delightful. If thou art for an active life, there is business enough in that populous city; and opportunities are never wanting to a man that is ready to lay hold on them. Besides, it is the popular character of Egypt, that whosoever dwells in it finds an employment suitable to his inclination. But, if thou art melancholy and contemplative, in my opinion, thou couldst not have chosen a country more agreeable to such a temper.

Were I in thy station, I should make frequent visits to the pyramids, and never be weary of searching out the antiquity of those admirable structures. There is hardly any thing made by human art, which has put me upon more important studies and disquisitions,

sitions, than the original of these stupendous fabricks. They far surpass in grandeur and magnificence the most renowned buildings of the Greek and Roman empires, even in the zenith of their most flourishing state. And I would fain learn when they were first erected, by whom, and for what end? For I cannot believe what Josephus, the Jewish Historian, reports of them, that they were built in the time of Moses their Lawgiver, and that all those of the Hebrew nation, amounting to some hundreds of thousands, were employed as slaves to the work, by the King then reigning in Egypt.

I have perused Herodotus the Grecian, Diodorus the Sicilian, with Strabo, Pliny, and other writers, who have all taken great pains to search into the antiquity of the pyramids: Yet, after all their travels in Egypt, and their converse with the Priests of that country, they seem to have received but small light into this affair; leaving things in uncertainty, and not agreeing in their accounts. One will have them to be only designed for sepulchres of the Kings; another says they were built by Joseph the Hebrew, the Vizir of Egypt; and that they were the granaries where he laid up seven years provision of corn, against the famine which in his days afflicted the earth. Thus they differ in their sentiments. And our countryman Ibn Abd' Alhokm declares, That, when he was in Egypt, he could not draw from any of the Priests the least certainty as to the age of these pyramids, or their founders; which makes him conclude, that, since there was no memory or footsteps of their original left among men, it is probable they were built before the flood.

This agrees exactly with what others of our Arabian writers have delivered concerning King Saudrid, who reigned in Egypt three hundred years before the deluge. They relate strange things of this Prince; and, among the rest, that he dreamed, 'That the fixed stars came down from heaven to the earth, overturning all things with the violence of their precipitate fall.' Being much troubled at this

vision, he sent for the Priests and Sages ; who, when they were assembled together in the King's palace, Alcimon their Cater, or Prince of the Astrologers, told the King, ' That, a year before, he had seen a vision, which made a deep impression on his mind. ' For these celestial orbs appeared to descend so low ' as to touch the earth, so that the stars were mingled among men. Then he lifted up his hands above his head, in his dream, to keep the heaven from quite oppressing mortals with its weight. Whilst ' I was in this posture,' said he, ' methought I addressed myself to the Sun, beseeching that resplendent God to retire, with all its glittering train of light, to their ancient station on high. Whereupon the Sun made answer, When I shall have accomplished three hundred circuits, the heavens will return to their proper places.'

When Alcimon had related this vision, the King commanded the Astrologers to erect a scheme of the present configurations above, and tell him what they presaged. They did so, and all agreed, that a deluge should first overflow the whole earth, and that afterwards it should be totally destroyed by fire.

Upon the hearing of this, they say, King Saudrid commanded the pyramids to be built, carrying all his riches into them with the tables of the mysterious sciences and laws, and whatsoever was esteemed precious and worthy to be preserved from the general destruction. And the annals of Egypt say, that he commanded these words to be engraved on them :

I, Saudrid, laid the foundation of the pyramids, and finished them in six years : Yet I challenge any future King to demolish them in six hundred years, though it be much easier to ruin than to build. I covered them with silks ; let any man after me cover them with mats, if he can.

In

In thus asserting Soudrid to be the founder of the pyramids, it ought to be understood only of some of the greatest; and that the other succeeding Princes (perhaps after the flood) spurred on with emulation and desire of glory, built the rest; which is the only way to reconcile our Arabian writers to Herodotus, Diodorus, and other historians of the West, who assign Cheops or Chemnis, with Chephern, Chabryis, and Mycerinus the son of Chemnis, as founders of some particular pyramids. Whilst Strabo and Pliny ascribe the building of one to Rhodope, a famous strumpet; or, at least, to some of her paramours.

Doubtless, there is great obscurity and confusion in the records of the Ancients about the exact time when those illustrious monuments were built, which yet is an impregnable argument of their antiquity; since, when one author asserts this or that King to have built a pyramid, another demonstrates the contrary, by proving, that that pyramid was in being long before the days of the supposed founder. Neither can I find any concurrence of authorities so rational and exactly agreeing as that of the Arabians, who all unanimously deliver, as a certain truth, that these unparalleled structures were built long before the flood. All which is confirmed by the Egyptian annals themselves, penned by those of the Coptite race, who descended from Coptim, son of Masar, the son of Bauser, the son of Cham, the son of Noah; with whom and his family, Philemon, the good Priest, made an alliance by marriage, and in their custody were the records and traditions of the old world.

But, if it be granted, dear Eunuch, that those histories are true which relate to the transactions of the Kings of Egypt before the flood, what reason have we to call in question the fragments of Manetho, a Priest of Egypt; or the genealogy and succession of Egyptian Monarchs delivered by Herodotus; or the chronological registers of Egypt unfolded by Diodorus, which carry up the reign of

their Kings to above a thousand years beyond any other the most early epocha of the creation, except that of the Assyrians, or the intermediate ascent of past ages in the records of the Chinese and Indians?

I know not what to call it, whether the cowardice of the intellect, which dares not venture to launch into so vast a speculation; or its sloth, which will not take the pains to unfold and stretch its drowsy faculties on the most natural idea in the world. It is true, indeed, we cannot, without some fatigue, contemplate stedfastly the eternal existence and duration of things. It is an immortal thought, that can transport the soul back through such an infinity of ages. Yet the pleasure is agreeable to the undertaking; because truth, serene as the mornings in Egypt, inlightens the prospect, and tempts the mind, if it were possible, to look even beyond eternity itself: Whereas he that only confines his view to the narrow horizon of particular histories, is like a man in a wilderness, or a low and shady vale, where his eye is curbed with the interposition of thickets, uneven ground, and envious inclosures. For such are the dark controversies, inextricable difficulties, and affected umbrages of most writers, who never durst peep over the mountains of received opinion; or, if they did, they fearfully or maliciously hid their discoveries from the rest of mortals. I tell thee, as God is eternal, there cannot be assigned an instance of time wherein the world did not exist. For the first matter flows as naturally from his essence, as light from the sun.

If thou adorest any other God but this, thou wilt be found in the number of Idolaters and Infidels, who pay divine honours to certain mighty angels, architects, as they believe, of the universe.

They behold houses, castles, and great cities built by mortals, and, at a certain period, ruined by fire, water, earthquakes, or other accidents; or destroyed by the effects of war: From hence they form a notion of the world's original and catastrophe: They consider

consider the animals, plants, and minerals; that every individual perishes in time; and that even in the heavens there are strong symptoms of corruption and alteration. Hence they collect arguments to prove the weakness and decay of universal nature, which they vainly compare to the life of a man, a beast, or a tree. And as they have their appointed seasons of birth, growth, maturity, decay, and death; so it is with the universe.

But all this is sophistry; or, to speak more favourably, we ought to charge it to the account of short meditation. For, though the individuals of all kinds are changed, cease and disappear at their appointed periods; yet their species or kinds themselves remain for ever before our eyes. As fast as one man dies another is born; and so it is with the brutes: And the seasons of the year in their proper course renew all the vegetables. We find the elements, the sun, moon, stars, and earth, remain unchangeable. And why then should we think they were not always so, and will not continue so for ever? Or, if this be too bold a stretch, let us conceive them at least much more ancient and durable, than they are generally thought to be. And, if these greater beings shall undergo a change in their outward forms, we may yet believe their substances will remain for ever.

But, whether corporeal beings are thus lasting or no; we have something in us that can never perish. Our souls are immortal, and need not the embalming of Egypt to preserve them from corruption.

Therefore, dear Mehemet, since we are destined to live for ever in one state or other, let us not fear death, which is but a minute's slumber, a short trance, out of which we shall immediately awake, to increase our knowledge and experience of those mysteries and secrets of nature, which at present are hid from us. In a word, let us live like Philosophers, and then we may hope to die with the same equanimity of spirit as he did, who, in his last agonies,

nies, being asked by his friends, 'Where was all his philosophy now?' answered, 'I am just entering on a new discovery concerning the nature of salt.' And with that word he expired.

Paris, 7th of the 2d Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XII.

To the most Venerable Mufti.

IF the publick seditions should always continue, or be as frequently renewed as they have lately been at Constantinople; and if their effects shall be equally fatal to the Grandees, as has been this last horrid mutiny of the soldiers; to congratulate any man's rise to an eminent dignity will be but to flatter him, and addreses of this nature must be esteemed no better than mock compliments, civil insults, and fashionable sarcasms: Since, at this rate, great honours ought to be looked on no otherwise, but as direct advances and nearer approaches to infamy and death, when a man is exalted from an obscure fastness and humble security to the glorious hazard of a precipitate fall.

It is therefore, when I come to kiss the dust of thy feet among the croud of True Believers, and to welcome thee to the most sacred and sublime Vicarship on earth, I draw near with an indifference suitable to a Mussulman, wishing thee not more joy than safety in that mysterious station, but such a temperament of both as is due to thy sanctity and incorrupt actions. In a word, I wish thee a perpetual immunity from thy predecessor's temptations, and from his crimes: and then thou needest not fear his misfortune and disgrace.

Let not what I have said pass for an argument of disrespect and undutifulness to the heir of prophetick
and.

and apostolick revelation, the great Patriarch of the Faithful. I reverence both thy office and person, yet am commanded to avoid flattery and partial addresses, when I write to the greatest sages in the empire. And, had not this injunction been laid on me, my own natural temper would prompt me to shun that vice which renders a man so much less than himself, by how much he exalts another above his due.

I have often proposed to thy predecessor the mighty benefit that would redound to the whole Ottoman empire, if learning were more encouraged, and the histories of foreign nations were translated into the familiar language of the Mussulmans.

It is, that those who are destined to subdue all things, and have already spent their glorious conquests through the greatest part of the earth, should be acquainted with the transactions of former times, the wars of illustrious and brave heroes, the rise and fall of ancient kingdoms, and, in general, the most noted revolutions in the world. From such records our Generals and military men may draw examples of fortitude and patience, conduct and prudence, in all the fatigues and difficulties of war. Our Statesmen may improve their knowledge in all the maxims of policy and wisdom requisite in time of peace. In fine, men of all conditions may learn the precepts of morality and vice.

It seems to me it is pity, that we, who possess the territories of the ancient Grecians, the kingdoms of Corinth and Lacedæmon; the empire of Macedon, and the State of the Jews; should be ignorant of the laws by which these divers countries were of old governed; and the characters, lives, and actions of their first Lawgivers and succeeding Governors.

But, if thou shalt determine, that the knowledge of these remote affairs is superfluous and unnecessary for True Believers, let them at least not be ignorant in their own history, and the original of their progenitors.

It is true, we Arabians have all along taken care of our genealogies, every family and tribe being diligent to preserve the memory of their ancestors, and all concur with an unanimous zeal to register the holy lineage of Mahomet, the Messenger of God. So that we can from his father Abdulla run up in a direct paternal line to Caydar, the second son of Ismael (on whom be the benedictions of God :) We are not ignorant how this Caydar (from whom the noble Corci's derive their pedigree) first settled at Mecca, in pure devotion to the square temple, which was built by angels ; when he might as well have chosen the more fertile plains of Meda, Persia, and Assyria, as did his brethren Doama, Naphis, and Redma. But he foresaw by his skill in astrology, that the inhabitants of those regions would be Idolaters : And so it came to pass ; for they were in the number of those who adored the fire. For the same reason, he chose not for his seat Armenia, though that country be renowned for the resting of Noah's ark on Mount Geudis, and the famous city Themanine, or the work of eighty, who escaped in the ark. But Caydar knew that the people of that province should worship the sun, and it was verified in the posterity of his brethren Nabfam and Masna. Therefore he chose Mecca, though a barren country, because he knew it was the seat predestined to the elect lineage, the generation of just men and prophets, from whom was to spring the light of the world, Mahomet, who in Paradise is called Al Batrasim, and in Heaven Achmet.

Caydar was the only son of Ismael who took part with his father, and followed his example, worshipping one God, Creator of the worlds, as he had learned by tradition from Abraham the Beloved of the Eternal : Whereas Naybeyeth, Abbael, Thema, and the rest of the twelve either adored the sun, moon, and stars, or the elements, except Jackour, who paid divine honours to the true Betlemer ; and Hadal and Massa, who sacrificed beasts to the idols Bohinun and Alze.

And,

And, as our historians have been thus particularly exact in recording the affairs of the twelve sons of Ismael, so they have shewed themselves no less precise in relating the transactions of the twelve tribes which descend from them, even down to the present age.

I do not insist on this, to teach thee something whereof thou art ignorant ; but to put thee in mind of the benefit and advantage, besides the vast delight which accrues to a nation, by thus preserving the memoirs of their ancestors ; in which my countrymen have exceeded the fidelity and care of all other people.

Had it not been for the industry of Arabian writers, the history of the whole Saracen empire, the successions of the Caliphs, with their wars and conquests, would have been either quite lost to this age, or at least much depraved and falsified by the malice of Christian and Persian authors, both equally enemies to the truth ; by which it is evident, that every nation ought to register their own transactions.

What, therefore, I chiefly aim at is, that the glorious Osmans, who have by their valour entered into the possessions and territories of many ancient nations, might also be acquainted with the histories of those people, whose lands they enjoy : But above all, I wish, that after they have found a way to so much wealth and honour, they would not lose themselves and their own original.

I speak of the Turks, properly so called ; the descendants of the Scythians, who, by some, were esteemed the most ancient nation on earth ; a people formed by nature for the empire of the world ; were never conquered themselves, yet spread their victories over all Asia. They routed Zopyrio, a General of Alexander the Great : And drove back a huffing King of Egypt, with shame and loss to his own country : In fine, they were a people naturally just, temperate, hardy, and endued with all the excellent qualities which the philosophy of the Greeks
and

and Romans could never inspire in their subjects, though they aimed at it.

These were the people, O Oracle of Believers, from whom the present Turks descend. And is it not a shame that they can give no other account of their ancestors, but what they borrow from the Christians, who, in the mean time, reproach the Mussulmans with ignorance and barbarism?

It is for this reason I renew the same request to thee, which I often made to thy predecessor, that learning may be encouraged: Let all the ancient records and histories of the Greeks and Romans be sought out and translated by men skilful in languages into the familiar speech of the Ottomans: Some, I know, are already common among the Grandees, as Herodotus, Plutarch, and others; but let not any credible writer be wanting.

In doing this, thou wilt put a check to the scoffs of Infidels, augment the honour and interest of the Mussulmans, and leave an immortal name behind thee on earth; which will make thy joys in Paradise more sweet to an infinity of ages.

Paris, 29th of the 3d Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XIII.

To the Kaimacham.

ALL Europe, except the French and Swedes, hangs down her head for the death of the German Emperor. He went to the Immortals on the 2d day of this moon, after a long fit of sickness, and forty-nine years of life on earth.

Nathan Ben Saddi, Agent of the Porte at Vienna, informs me, that, on the same day whereon the Emperor died, the Imperial palace took fire on a sudden, and with such impetuosity, that a great part of it

it was presently consumed, and the King of Hungary and Bohemia, the Emperor's son, narrowly escaped with his life. This is esteemed a bad omen to the empire; and, without being superstitious, I can assure thee, that Germany is in a very bad condition at this juncture. The Electors are so divided on the score of religion, and their secular interest and alliances, that, in all probability, they will not, with ease, decide the succession.

The Duke of Brandenburg, having united himself to the Swedes, will not consent to the installing Leopold Ignatius Josephus, the Emperor's son, because that Prince supports the cause of the Poles and Danes. The Palatine of Heydelburg and Duke of Bavaria are at odds about their private pretensions. The Duke of Saxony would fain be Emperor himself, or have one at least of the Lutheran religion: And the rest are so incensed against the House of Austria, that it is thought none but the ecclesiastick Princes will vote for the King of Hungary and Bohemia. So that, there being no King of the Romans to claim the succession by the laws of the empire, the throne is like to be vacant yet a while.

Cardinal Mazarine, who watches all opportunities to aggrandise his Master, has dispatched away several couriers into Germany, to negotiate privately with the Electors, and concert those measures which will be most for the interest of France. And, I tell thee, this Minister has no small influence on the Elector of Cologne and Prince Palatine of the Rhine: Besides, thou wilt say, he goes the right way to work, when thou shalt know that he makes use of the French gold to compass his designs.

No sooner did the news of the Emperor's death arrive at this Court, but it was observed the Cardinal took up a hundred thousand pistoles of the public bankers in this city: And every body guessed how they would be disposed of.

The Portuguese Ambassador at this Court has caused extraordinary fire-works to be played on the
river

river Seine, before the palace of the King, in honour of his master's coronation, the young King of Portugal. But the Spaniards are preparing more destructive fire-works on the frontiers of that kingdom, being ready to enter it with an army of sixteen thousand men to recover the Portuguese crown.

In sending thee these intelligences, sage Minister, I am not concerned for the Infidels. Who dies, or who lives, who rises, or who falls, is all one to Mahmut, provided the Grand Signior's health, life, and happiness be augmented : And this I speak as an Arabian and True Believer.

Paris, 30th of the 4th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XIV.

To Raba Mahomet, General of the Ottoman Forces, at his Camp near Adrianople.

THE sacred empire of True Believers is beset at this time with Infidels, rebels, and hereticks. Here are many rumours spread abroad concerning the Persians, and the interest they have in the Bassa and citizens of Babylon. They talk also that some malecontents design things which ought not to be named.

God has given me two ears, and I hear these discourses with both, but I entertain them with one unchangeable judgment, that they are only the whispers of fame, which has a thousand double tongues. If it be true, that the four chiauses, who were dispatched to Babylon, from the Grand Signior, to confirm the inhabitants of that city in their allegiance, and assure them of speedy succours, were murdered by the disloyal citizens ; I doubt not but it is as true, that the plague has consumed the greatest part of the red-heads, in their camp at Aransacat.

ransacat. What though these Babylonish mungrels cry, 'Long live the King of Persia!' the rest of the empire, with true zeal and devotion, pray for the health and prosperity of the Grand Signior. What though the Sultan has sworn by God and his throne, by the heavens and the earth, that he will go against the Venetians in person! The Mufti can easily absolve him in case of supreme necessity, when his presence is requisite against the more accursed Kysilbaschi.

It is probable the Osman monarchy may be much embarrassed by domestick troubles and foreign wars; yet he that founded it, and is the conservator of ages, will, out of these very distempers and evils, produce a good constitution of health in the State, and a firmer establishment against all enemies.

In the mean while the Venetians are very busy in their levies at home, and in making interests abroad. Couriers are perpetually posting up and down Christendom, to and from that city. They would willingly have all the business of Europe superseded for their sakes. It is every-where whispered there is some grand design on foot against the Turks, but nobody knows what. And I tell thee France, Spain, Germany, Poland, Sweden, and the rest of the Nazarene kingdoms, are too much intangled among themselves to have any thoughts of meddling with remote affairs.

The Poles would have had the German Emperor take that crown in vassalage, on the condition of protecting it from the Swedes. But, whilst the Emperor was alive, he weighed the difficulties, and refused so chargeable an offer. Now he is lately dead, and the empire is hardly capable to defend itself.

Differences are newly risen between the Duke of Bavaria, and the Elector Palatine of Heydelburg; each claiming a right to be Vicar of the empire during the vacancy; and they are preparing on both sides to dispute the matter with the sword; whilst the King of Sweden smiles secretly at their intestine quarrels, resolving to be revenged on Germany, for the

LETTER XV.

To Cara Hali, Physician to the Grand Signior.

I HAVE encountered a passage in the history of the first Caliphs, which a little intangles me. My faith is disjointed. Thou knowest we Mussulmans believe, that Abu Becre was the true successor of the Prophet : Yet, when I consider, that he attained the sovereignty by surprise, without the consent of the Mussulmans, I know not what to think of it.

After the death of the Messenger of God, the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina raised a sedition, and took up arms, each challenging the right of election to themselves, when, to prevent the ill consequences of this tumult, Abu Becre and Omar immediately came to them; and, to end the controversy, Omar, stretching forth his hand to Abu Becre, saluted him Caliph, and, lifting up his hand to heaven, swore allegiance to him : Which example suddenly prevailed on others, and so the tumult was appeased. Yet Omar himself seemed to repent of what he had done. For, a while after, he was heard to say, ‘ Assuredly, the inauguration of Abu Becre was a rash unadvised thing ; God avert the evil which may result from it. But let it be a law, that, if any one hereafter shall presume to do as I have done, and swear fealty to another, without the assent of the Mussulmans, he shall be put to death.’

But that which is of greatest moment with me is, that Ali Eb’n Abi Thaleb, the son-in-law of the Prophet, was not present at this election, who had as much right to the Caliphate, as any of them, if not more ; at least he had a right to vote. And, when he first heard the news, he protested against what they had done as null and invalid, in regard they had not consulted him. Certainly, Ali Eb’n
Abi

Abi Taleb was a matchless hero, performing miracles of valour in defence of the Prophet. When he besieged Chaibar, a city of the Jews, he took the gates of the city from off their hinges, and used them as his shield. When he brandished his glittering sword, he made his enemies tremble. I will say no more in his praise, lest thou shouldest conclude I have lifted myself in the number of the Kyzil Basha. What I write is only by way of scrutiny, being dissatisfied about these things.

So, when Abu Becre lay on his death-bed, he called for Othman Eb'n Aphan, the scribe, and bid him write as follows: 'In the name of God gracious and merciful; this is the testimony of Abdollah Eb'n Abu Kohopha, when he was arrived at the last hour of this world, and the first of the world to come.' Then he fell into a trance, while Othman proceeded, and wrote the name of Omar Ebno'l Chattab. Then Abu Becre awaked, and asking Othman 'whom he had named for his successor;' he replied, 'Omar;' 'Thou hast done well,' said he, 'and according to my mind. Yet, if thou hadst named thyself, assuredly, thou art worthy of the honour.' Thus Omar succeeded to the Caliphate, by the private order of Abu Becre, without asking the consent of the Mussulmans. It looks like a contrivance or bargain between those two at first. When Omar swore fealty to Abu Becre, one would suspect he made him promise to bequeath the Caliphate to him. Be it how it will, thou seest Omar accepted the government on conditions which he himself had made unlawful, when he prohibited any succession that should be made without the consent of the Mussulmans. He was the first that was called Amiro'l-mumenim, or Commander of the Faithful.

It is reported, that, when Omar was near his death, those that stood about him desired him to name his successor; they themselves recommended Ali Eb'n Abi Taleb, because of his relation to the

Prophet. But he rejected him, and committed the election of his successor to Othman, Ali, Telha, Azobia, Abu Obeid, and Saad Eb'n Abi Wakka. Abu Obeid therefore, coming to Ali Eb'n Abi Taleb, said thus to him, 'Art thou he to whom I may swear fidelity, that thou wilt act according to the book of God, and the laws of his Prophet, and the constitution of the two Seniors?' Ali answered, 'I will ever act according to the book of God, and the laws of his Prophet; but, as to the constitutions of the two Seniors, I will follow my own counsel.' Then Abu Obeid, going to Othman, said the same words: And Othman promised to perform all that they required. So they chose Othman to succeed Omar in the Caliphate. He was accused of too great partiality to those of his blood; for he recalled Hacem Ebno'l As Eb'n Omaih, whom the Prophet had banished. He gave him also an hundred thousand aspers, and to Abdalla Eb'n Chaled, he gave forty thousand. They taxed him also with pride, in that he sat on the highest seat of the prophetick throne, where none but the holy Prophet himself had ever sat: For Abu Becre, in reverence to the Messenger of God, sat one step below it, and Omar two. So that the Arabians, being incensed at Othman's arrogance, and other vices, took up arms and killed him. Then succeeded Ali.

I rehearse this history to thee, that thou mayest know the particular grounds of my dissatisfaction, and give me thy opinion in this matter. For, if Abu Becre, Omar, and Othman were unlawfully lifted to the Caliphate, it follows, that they were usurpers, and Hali the only true successor of the Prophet. And, if this be granted, then we have no reason to curse the Persians, who are the followers of Hali. God knows which is in the right, we or they. We are all the disciples of the Prophet, and believe in the unity of the Divine essence. God bless Mahomet our Lawgiver, with all those of his

his house. God bless Mahomet our glorious Sultan : In fine, God bless thee and me.

Paris, 15th of the 5th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XVI.

To Cara Mustapha, Bassa.

BY the notices which I receive from Constantinople, it appears that the ground of all the publick discontents in that city is the Venetians conquest and possession of Tenedos : As if the people thought that island would prove as fatal now to the Mussulmans, as it was formerly to old Troy, when the Grecians, under the conduct of Agamemnon, pitched their first camp there, to recover Helena, the fairest woman of Greece, whom Paris, the Prince of Troy, had ravished from her husband's embraces.

That rape was fatal to the Trojans : For, after ten years war, their city was taken by stratagem, and burnt to ashes : Their Princes and Nobles either all slain, or carried away captives by the victorious Greeks. Only Æneas saved his father alive, carrying him on his back out of the flames, and, with some other Commanders, escaped to sea, in such vessels as they found ready. The history of all his adventures is too tedious for a letter. Suffice it to say, that, after many voyages from one region to another, at last he landed in Italy, where he and his company settled. And from them the Venetians, with other people of Europe, derive their original.

It is this makes the present possession of Tenedos appear as an ill omen, in the eyes of the superstitious : As if those relicks of ancient Troy were now come to recover the habitations of their fathers, and drive both Greeks and Mussulmans out of the empire.

But these are only chimæra's and dreams ; for, when a nation is once displanted from the native seat, they seldom or never take root there again. Besides, who knows whether the Venetians descend from Troy or no ? It is true, indeed, if historians speak truth, that Æneas sailed into Italy, two years after the burning of Troy : It is probable also, that he built Lavinium, as Padua is ascribed to Antenor, one of his Captains. But where is the consequence, that the Venetians should, therefore, be the offspring of these heroick fugitives ? They may as well say the French are the posterity of the Moors, because those Africans once seated themselves in Spain. For just so independent are the States of Italy one of another, and their inhabitants of as different genealogies, as are these two potent kingdoms, with the people that dwell in them.

And, now the Trojan war is in my mind, I cannot but smile at the egregious folly of Ajax, the son of Telamon. This was a great Commander in the Grecian army, a huge, brawny, giant-like fellow, that had performed prodigies of strength and valour in combating with the Trojans, and yet, at last, fell upon his own sword and killed himself, because he could not have his will of Ulysses ; and all about an old rusty buckler taken from the enemy, which Ajax claimed as his right, in reward of his meritorious services, and of the many scars he had received. But Ulysses over-ruled the Council of war that was called on purpose to decide this quarrel, and got the shield to himself. For, being a cunning, plausible fellow, he pleaded, that, though the courage and brave actions of Ajax deserved all due honour and acknowledgment, yet the surprise of Troy, and ending of the war, were owing only to his wit and contrivance, who deluded the Trojans with a wooden horse, in the belly of which lay a detachment of armed men ; and these, after the horse was admitted into that city, came out of their nest in the dead of the night, and set fire to the horse, opening the gates also to the Grecian army.

If

If the Venetians could invent some such stratagem, perhaps, there would be danger of their taking Constantinople; but till then, illustrious Bassa, there is no reason to fear these Infidels. Besides, it will be very easy to dispossess them of that ominous island, and so dissipate the charm which has bewitched the seditious rabble. But I would counsel, that it be attempted in time, before the Venetians are got into the Hellespont with their navy: For there is no success against these Infidels by sea. That element, it seems, is the wife of the Duke of Venice, being espoused with a ring and other solemn ceremonies, on a certain festival of the Nazarenes.

One would think also, that the English had made successful love to the sea; for their navies are always prosperous. We have fresh news come in of an encounter between them and the Spanish West-India fleet, near the Island of Teneriff, wherein there were seventeen of the Spanish ships sunk and burnt, and among them were five great galleons. They took from them an immense treasure of gold and silver, with other costly merchandise.

The French Court rejoices mightily at this exploit; not in any real love to the English, but in hatred of the Spaniards. For between these two nations there seems to be an irreconcilable antipathy. Besides, the French have reasons of State for their joy, being in league with the English Commonwealth.

That which renders this victory the more remarkable, is, that it was obtained in a Spanish harbour, the port of Santa Cruz in Teneriff. Every one extols the English Commander for a very brave person; his name is Blake. I am the more particular in this relation, because thou art expert in marine affairs, having had the command of the invincible Ottoman armado.

There is a post newly come in from Germany, who informs us, that the King of Sweden and

Prince Ragotski have taken the strong fort of Brzeki Litenski from the King of Poland.

The Portuguese Ambassador at this Court presses the King with much earnestness to send aids to his Master, in regard the Spaniards are actually entered into Portugal, and have taken Olivenna, a city of that kingdom.

I formerly acquainted the Ministers of the Divan, that the King of Spain had caused all the people of his kingdom to be numbered: Now I tell thee farther, that, in order to carry on the war effectually against Portugal, this Monarch has commanded the fifth man in every family to take up arms, and follow the campaign. At which rate, they say, he will have an hundred thousand men in the field.

In the mean time, all the discourse here at present is concerning the siege of Montmeli, a very strong place in Flanders. It was invested by the French army, on the 11th of this moon, under the command of the Marshal de la Ferte Seneterre.

France has sent a great many brave Generals into the field this summer; and I perceive the Bassa's of the Ottoman empire are not like to tarry at home. God inspire thee and thy equals with a resolution which knows no medium between victory and a glorious death.

Paris, 16th of the 6th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XVII.

To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna.

THE beginning of thy letter surprised me with wonder, when I read that a Chiaus from the Grand Signior, the Sovereign of Sovereigns, Lord of three empires and five-and-twenty kingdoms, should have the dishonour not to find admittance within

within the walls of Vienna: And that in a time when the Germans have no reason to provoke a foreign war, being sufficiently embarrassed with domestic troubles. But when I read farther, and perceived, that no Ambassador, not even of the Christian Princes, has any more privilege at this juncture; and that it is an established law of the empire thus to reverence the Majesty of their deceased Sovereign, and consult the safety of the next election; I ceased to resent this any longer as an indignity to our great Master, and only concluded it to be some mystery of the Austrian State.

It is an argument of profound respect to the Imperial Ghost, that the churches are all hung with mourning throughout the hereditary dominions, and that no music is permitted either in the temples or elsewhere; no jollity or mirth, till the funeral obsequies are performed, and the body of Cæsar is consigned to the place of its everlasting repose.

As to the quarrel between the Duke of Bavaria, and Prince Palatine, about the Vicariate, there is much to be said on both sides: And it ought to be a thing indifferent to thee and me, which of these two gets the victory. Yet, for the sake of truth, I will tell thee in short what I have collected out of the journal of Carcoa, thy predecessor, and out of other memoirs as they came to my hands.

It appears then, that, by the Golden Bull of Charles IV, this dignity was declared inherent in one Palatinate family, in the right of their possession of that principality; and that it has been so for many ages, even before there were any Electors established in the empire. It is upon this ground the present Elector Palatine claims it. But, on the other side, it is manifest that, when Maximilian, the father of the present Duke of Bavaria, was invested with the Electoral dignity, it was inserted in the Imperial Bull, that the vicegerency of the empire, during an interregnum, shall henceforth belong to that family. Yet this grant was again disannulled by the late pacification at Munster. And so the

business is left in dispute between these two families. He of Bavaria trusts to his strength and riches, being also backed by the ecclesiastick Princes; whilst the other only confides in the justice of his cause, the right of unquestionable inheritance.

Leaving, therefore, these Grandees to prosecute their several claims, I will tell thee what makes the freshest noise in this city is an attempt which the Prince of Conde lately made on the town of Calais, a sea-port of this kingdom. He had received certain intelligence, that the Governor had sent out the best part of the garrison, to fortify Ardres, a place not far from Calais, and supposed to be in great danger; upon this news the Prince marched with great expedition, designing to surprise Calais by night. But he was discovered before he came near them: and the inhabitants, taking up arms, appeared on the walls and ramparts to welcome him, so that he was forced to retire again with the loss of near a thousand men.

Here are two men come out of England, who pretend to be Prophets, foretelling the downfall of the Pope, whom they call Antichrist, a beast, a dragon, and I know not how many other titles. One of them is gone to Rome to tell the Holy Father to his face what is like to befall him. The French Court looks upon them as madmen; and nobody can esteem them better if they go to Rome, where they will infallibly fall into the hands of the Inquisition, which, thou knowest, is a hell upon earth. Thy brother Adonai felt the smart of it, only for two or three words uttered in contempt of their religion; and, though he was not condemned to death, yet he suffered a tedious imprisonment; till, at length, the plague released him both from that, and the change of this mortal life.

Nathan, if he had died by the stroke of the executioner, or by fire, the common death of those who rail at the Roman faith, I could not pronounce him a Martyr, unless it were to his own folly and rashness; since he was not placed there to make professy,

lytes, either to the law of Moses, or Mahomet; but to penetrate into the secret transactions of the Followers of Jesus.

Thy business is the same at Vienna: Pursue that with alacrity, and God shall protect thee from all adversity.

Paris, 9th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XVIII.

To Melec. Amet..

I Welcome thy return to the earth again: For it appears, by thy letter, that thou hast been in the other world. It were to be wished thou wouldst favour the living with a journal of thy travels and observations among the dead. Those regions of silence would afford matter of noise enough to mortals, that are always greedy of foreign news. Perhaps, if thou wouldst communicate the remarks thou hast made during that ramble of thy soul, we might find out some method of correspondence between our world and that invisible state. We might contrive a way to send dispatches to our friends, and to receive their answers again; or, at least, we might make some useful discoveries in that empire of shadows.

But, tell me seriously, Dost thou think it was any more than a trance or dream that has happened to thee? Such as frequently fall out in melancholy constitutions? I once informed Cara Hali the physician of such an accident as this, not far from Paris. It was of a man that had lain five and thirty hours as dead in all human appearance, and so given over by the physicians: Yet, after that period, he recovered his senses again, and told strange things to those that were about him. Surely, these are but

slumbers of the soul; and death itself is but a deeper sleep, when it causes the dissolution of the body. Doubtless, men awake again in some other active state. For, as a flame of fire is equally disposed to imbody itself in the fat of flesh or fish, in oil, wax, sulphur, or any proper vehicle; and, as soon as it is extinguished in one, will readily translate itself to all the rest, if they be within the sphere of its activity (as the Western philosopher speaks) so is the spirit or flame of life always in a posture of transmigration. For aught we know, he that is a King this hour may be a peacock the next, and, within a few days, served up at his successor's table as a royal dish.

But, not to insist too much on these secrets, I will relate to thee a passage not unlike that thou hast experienced.

It is recorded in the writings of an authentick pen, the manuscript of an ancient Arabian, that Al' Rashid, Emperor of the Faithful, had many famous physicians about him; among the rest, he highly esteemed Saleh Eb'n Nahali, an Indian, for recovering one of his near kinsmen out of such a condition as I suppose thou hast been in. That kinsman was very dear to the Emperor, who was sitting at a feast, when news was brought him that he was dead. The Emperor, extremely troubled to hear this, burst forth into tears, and caused the table to be taken away. Then Jaafer Eb'n Yahya, one of his confidants, immediately desired that Saleh, the Indian physician, might visit the corpse of his dead relation; who went accordingly, and, having felt his pulse, and considered him well, he returned to the Emperor, and said, 'Cease to mourn, my Lord, Commander of the Faithful: For, if this man be dead, and I do not restore him to life again, may I be divorced from all my wives for ever.'

He had scarce made an end of saying this, when a second dispatch came to the Emperor from those who were about his kinsman, assuring him that he was really departed this life.

Then

Then Al' Rashid began to curse the Indians and their ignorance. But Saleh persisted in his assertion, crying out with great vehemency, 'Be not incredulous, O Emperor of the Faithful, nor suffer thy kinsman to be buried, till I have been with him again : For, assuredly, he is not dead ; I will shew you something that is admirable.' Al' Rashid, pacified with these words, took Saleh along with him to visit the supposed dead person..

As soon as they came into the chamber, the Indian took a needle and thrust between the nail and the flesh of his left thumb. Then the intranced snatched up his hand toward his mouth.. At which Saleh cried out, 'Now, my Lord, comfort yourself ; for dead men use not to be sensible of pain.' After this, he blew up a powder into his nose, upon which, in a few minutes, the patient sneezed ; and, sitting upright in his bed, spoke to Al' Rashid, kissing also his hand. The Emperor asking him, 'How he found himself ?' He replied, 'Benefactor of mankind, I have been in the sweetest sleep that ever I remember fell on me in my life. Only I dreamed that a dog came and bit me by my left thumb, the pain of which waked me.' With that he shewed him the mark of the needle and the blood, adding, 'Surely, it was no dream, but a truth, for I feel it yet.' The Emperor was extremely pleased with his Indian physician, and did him great honour. His kinsman also, whose name was Ibrahim, lived many years after this, and was made Governor of Egypt, where he died, and was buried.

The Eastern physicians have been famous in all ages, and are now much in esteem among the Franks, who addict themselves to study the sciences : Here are some very learned physicians in these parts, and not a few ignorant ones, who serve as foils to set off the lustre and fame of the others. Every province and city of France swarm with them ; and they all find employment either to kill or cure. The Nazarenes live very intemperately, and fall into abundance of diseases, whereof the East is whol-

ly ignorant: Therefore it is necessary for them to be well stocked with physicians. Yet it was satyrically observed by a certain French Lord, that, in a town not far from his palace, the inhabitants were all healthy long-lived men, till a certain empirick came and took up his residence there; for then they began to sicken and die apace. But this may be an invidious remark. The Arabian proverb says, 'No man is a good physician, but he that is born such;' Meaning that some are naturally disposed and fitted to this science. Indeed, I have known admirable cures performed by men who never studied in academies, or could answer three questions in anatomy; nay, some women have a gift of this nature, and are very fortunate in their practices. But, when all is done, the beasts are most happy, who are all their own physicians by instinct.

Melec, I wish thee such a state of health as needs no medicines: But, if it be thy misfortune to fall into Parmenides's indisposition, I counsel thee to make use of the advice given him by a philosopher; who, when Parmenides complained of a pain in his stomach, and asked his advice, bid him use such and such confections and electuaries: The other replied, 'He had made trial of them all, and many more, yet found no ease.' 'Then,' said the philosopher, 'turn poet, for they generally have good stomachs.'

Paris, 9th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XIX.

To the Kaimacham.

Couriers upon couriers are come to this city with the joyful news that Montmeli is surrendered to the French: For which the whole body of the Parliament, and the city of Paris, the Chancellor

lor of the kingdom, with Cardinal Antonio Barberini and all the ecclesiasticks, went to the grand mosque, or temple, where Te Deum was sung this afternoon, with a pompous solemnity. And now, whilst I am writing, there is such a confused noise of great guns, ringings of bells, and shouts of people, that one would think it were enough to wake the very dead, and make them start from their graves to inquire what is the matter.

The truth of it is, this place is counted one of the strongest in Europe, and the inhabitants were not insensible of it when they made their conditions of honour with the King. And therefore we need not wonder at the excessive joy of the French.

When the keys were delivered to the King by the Deputies of the town, one of them, in the name of the rest, made this following address :

‘Sire, We should have had just reason to complain of fortune, and accuse ourselves of cowardice, if we had surrendered this impregnable fortress to the arms of a Prince less glorious and puissant than your Majesty : Since our very walls are of sufficient strength to defend us, without taking up arms, against a power inferior to yours. But, in regard it is the will of Heaven, that we must change our Master, we rejoice to fall into the hands of so invincible and generous a Monarch ; and we hope, Sire, that your Majesty will shew us the more favour, for having used our utmost efforts to conserve an inviolable fidelity to the Catholick King, who but yesterday was our Master.’

This was spoken with so graceful an action, and such a becoming frankness, that the King, being mightily pleased with them, made them this answer :

‘Yes, I shall always remember that your constancy deserves my esteem. And now, considering you as my subjects, I will bestow such privileges on this city as shall oblige you to manifest no less courage and zeal for my service than you have done for the Catholick King.’

And,

And, to evidence that he has equal sentiments of gratitude and esteem for his Officers, by whose courage and conduct this important place is come under his obedience, the King has bestowed the Government of it on the Lieutenant-general of his armies, who was present at the siege, and was shot in seven places of his body. They call him the Marquis of Vandì. He has signalised his valour in sixteen sieges and battles, being marked all over with scars, the glorious characteristicks of an indefatigable and fortunate Hero.

It is fit the Divan should be informed of all such passages ; not to instruct them what to do in the like cases (for they are perfectly wise) but that these examples may be registered as spurs to virtue and magnanimity of spirit. For it cannot be supposed, that the Emperor of the True Believers will come short of these Infidel Kings, in rewarding his faithful and undaunted slaves.

Marshal de Ferte Seneterre has also had his share in the caresses and acknowledgments of the King and the whole Court.

This success has given a great damp to the Spaniards, who begin to retire as fast as they can from the neighbourhood of the French armies. On the other side, these are full of vigour and brisk resolutions, resolving not to end the campaign without some farther attempts in Flanders.

They creep by degrees into the very heart of that province, which is very like to be the stage of war, so long as the King of Spain has one town left in it. It is a very rich country, abounding in all the desirable productions of nature. And the people are very industrious to learn and improve whatsoever is profitable in art. All their unhappiness lies in this, that they are not able to protect themselves, and subsist independent of one or other of the neighbouring Crowns. So that, whenever those Sovereigns fall out, these poor people are miserably oppressed with armies ; and, in this case, their friends many times give them as much trouble as their enemies,

mies. Nay, it is difficult to determine which are their enemies, and which their friends. For to whatsoever Master they are subject, he drains their coffers of money by taxes and contributions, besides the intolerable vexation of quartering unruly soldiers, who commit a thousand insolences unpunished.

Poland is at this time in a bad condition, between the armies of Sweden, Austria, Brandenburg, Muscovy, Transylvania, and the forces of King Casimir.

The son of the deceased Emperor has sent a great army to the aid of that unfortunate Monarch, and it is confirmed on all hands, that they have laid siege to Cracow; whilst his Ambassador is negotiating with the Elector of Brandenburg, to draw him off from the Swedish interest. This is like to prove a war of long continuance, if the plague do not make peace, which rages in those parts, and destroys many thousands more than the sword or gun. The Muscovites have combated with this distemper above these two years, the Grand Duke being forced to fly, with his army, like vagabonds, before this inexorable Conqueror, which gives no quarter.

In the mean time, I hear ill news from Candia, where, they say, the Mussulmans have, in a late attempt upon that city, lost above four thousand men, with thirty-four ensigns, and a considerable treasure. These Infidels have also taken and destroyed, this summer, above thirty ships of Barbary, and as many more of Constantinople, Smyrna, Aleppo, Scanderoon, &c. On board of one of which they seized the yearly revenue which comes to the Grand Signior from Scanderoon; and out of another they have taken the revenue of Rhodes, killed a thousand True Believers, took half that number captives, and released abundance of Christian slaves: In a word, they have taken, out of the several vessels which fell into their hands, an immense treasure of silver, gold, and precious stones.

These continual successes of the Nazarenes would tempt one to think, that this war was unjustly commenced by Sultan Ibrahim, and therefore unhappily

pily carried on by his glorious successor, Sultan Mahomet. Pardon the effect of melancholy, benign Minister, if it be a crime to think, that the Creator of all things is angry with those who violate their solemn word and oath. Thou knowest the whole story of this war, and the first occasions of it. I say no more.

They have a proverb here in the West, 'That the voice of the people is the voice of God.' And, though I approve not the practice of those who make use of this popular aphorism to foment seditions in a state, yet I cannot but own there is a great deal of reason in it, and it may be verified in the present circumstances of Constantinople.

Thou observest that the soldiers are mutinous, and unwilling to serve any longer in this unfortunate war. Thou findest the merchants, and, in general, all sorts of people, discontented and factious. The avenues to that sanctuary of the world are blocked up by the Venetians; so that neither corn, nor other necessary provisions, can be brought to supply the wants of so many hundred thousands of people. In a word, thou seest the publick calamities have made them almost desperate; they care not what they do: Peace with the Christians is the word every-where, or else each impertinent mechanick will presage ruin to the Ottoman empire.

May God inspire thee and the other Ministers of the Divan, in this calenture of the State, to apply such remedies as may prevent the inconveniencies of a domestick war, which is always more fatal to a government than a foreign invasion.

Paris, 17th of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

L E T:

LETTER XX.

To Nathan Ben Saddi, a Jew, at Vienna.

NOW thou givest me some solid hopes of a convert. Thy letter has raised my expectation, since it is not penned in a style full of scruples and insignificant doubts, which would be endless : Nor yet does it savour of hypocrisy and dissimulation, as if thou intendest only to mock me and my faith, and still continue thyself an Infidel. But it abounds with very fair concessions, articles of reason and honour on thy side ; only expecting from me a true and authentick account of our holy Prophet's life, and of the miracles which can be produced in confirmation of his prophetick office. Thou wouldest fain see if any thing happened of this kind to the Messenger of God, parallel to the stupendous wonders which recommended Moses your Law-giver to the world, as the undoubted oracle of Heaven.

I protest there is no fault to be found in this demand : For it is but reason, that he who assumes the character of a Prophet should be distinguished from impostures by some evident signs and wonders : Yet it is needless to make an exact parallel, because the occasions of Moses's miracles were different from those of Mahommed, the seal of the Prophets. Your Law-giver had a commission, and power given him to work miracles, when he pleased : Whereas ours declared, that he was not sent to work miracles, but to preach the unity of the Divine essence, the resurrection of the dead, the joys of Paradise, and the torments of the damned.

Yet, lest the unbelieving world should doubt the truth of his mission, from his very birth, his life was graced with many supernatural favours. His mother bore him without the least pain of body or mind ; and, as soon as he breathed the vital air, he spoke with an audible voice, saluting his mother, and adding, I profess there is only one God, and that I am his Apostle; He was also circumcised by nature,

ture, coming into the world without his prepuce. At the same hour, the devils were forbid to ascend above the orb of the moon; and four voices were heard from the four corners of the square temple: The first saying, 'Proclaim, the truth is risen, and all lyars shall turn into hell.' The second uttering, 'Now is born an Apostle of your own nation, and the Omnipotent is with him.' The words of the third were, 'A book full of illustrious light is sent you from God.' And the fourth voice was heard to say, 'O Mahomet, we have sent thee to be a Prophet, Apostle, and guide to the world!

When he was about four years old, accompanying the sons of his nurse into the field, the blessed child retired into a cave, at the foot of the mountain Uriel to pray: When the archangel Gabriel appeared to him, and said, 'Bismillai rrahmani rrahimai, &c. In the name of God, compassionate and merciful, O child greatly beloved, I am sent to displant from thy heart the root of evil; for thy ejaculations made the gates of Paradise to fly open.' The young resigned one said, 'The will of thy Lord and mine be done.' Then the angel opened his breast with a razor of adamant, and, taking out his heart, squeezed from it the black contagion which was derived from Adam: And, having put the child's heart in his place again, he blessed him, and retired to the invisibles.

From that time the young favourite of Heaven grew up and prospered in all things, having the smiles of God and man. He was under the tuition of his uncle Abu Taleb, who, discerning the mark of an immense soul in his young nephew, was more solicitous for his welfare than if he had been his son. His fortune being low in the world, he had no other way to provide for his illustrious charge, than by placing him as a factor to Chadijah, a widow of the same tribe with Mahomet, which was the noblest among the Arabians. Besides, she was very beautiful and rich: And there wanted no hopes, that in time she might become Mahomet's wife.

That

That which chiefly encouraged them to this was a vision of Chadijah, every-where talked of in those parts. For she had divulged it herself, long before Mahomet became her servant, or his uncle had any thoughts of thus disposing of him. ‘The Sun seemed to leave his heaven and come down to her house, from whence he dispersed his beams through Arabia, Egypt, Persia, and, in fine, throughout the whole earth.’ This vision had made a deep impression on the mind of Chadijah, and she could not rest, till she had told it to a certain famous sage in those parts, who had great skill in astrology and other mysterious sciences, and was celebrated for the integrity of his manners. As soon as he heard the contents of her vision, he said, ‘In the name of God, O widow, enter into thy bath, and prepare thyself with the necessary purifications: For thou shalt shortly be married to the greatest Prophet in the world.’ And when she asked the astrologer; ‘What was the country, tribe, and name of her next husband;’ he told her, ‘He was an Arabian of Mecca, of the tribe of the Corei’s, and that his name was Mahomet.’

As yet the prophetick widow knew nothing of the nephew of Abu Taleb. But thou mayest imagine she felt strange passions, when his uncle afterwards recommended him to her service; and she knew that he was the man in whom the astrologer’s character was verified, as to his country, tribe, and name. For Mahomet was the son of Abdalla, who descended from the Bani Aschim, who were the noblest family in the tribe of the Corei’s. Who can express her sentiments, when she saw the beautiful youth making his first addresses to her as an humble slave, whom she believed Heaven had ordained for the partner of her bed! With what a grace and becoming modesty did he receive the last instructions and farewell of his parting uncle! However, she concealed her transports, and sent her beloved slave with a caravan into Syria, allowing him a noble pension.

In that journey there happened something very remarkable in honour of the admirable young man. For at a certain place on the road, as he waited on the Captain of the caravan to a synagogue of the Jews, no sooner had Mahomet set his foot over the threshold of the synagogue, but all the lamps therein were loosened from their chains, and fell down on the floor. All those of thy nation that were present, being astonished at the portentous accident, fell at the feet of the Rabbies, desiring their advice in this amazing circumstance. They, having performed the accustomed ceremonies and expiations, answered, 'It is revealed in the traditions of the Seniors, 'That, at what time soever an Arabian, called Mahomet, should be present at our solemnities, God should remove the candlesticks out of their places. 'It is therefore most certain, that such a one is now among us; let him not escape our hands, lest reproach and contempt come on Israel.' But behold, whilst they were busy in searching for the cause of this prodigy, two angels conveyed Mahomet to Mecca, where he soon after married Chadijah.

It were easy to recount many more miracles in the life of the Prophet; such as that of the cloud overshadowing him; the eagles perching on his head when he was asleep; the trees and stones proclaiming him the Apostle of God. And, if I were to make parallels, I think the stupendous descent which the moon made, at the prayers of the divine Messenger, comes not far short of that celebrated disorder on Mount Sinai, when your law was delivered by Moses.

If thou requirest undoubted testimonies for the truth of this miracle on our side, offer something that is unquestionable on thy own. We both equally confide in the different records of our nations, which were penned by men as liable to temptations and errors of all sorts as thou and I, and all that believe what they write. Therefore, unless thou canst start some more infallible authority, or prove the eternal
and

and universal obligations of your law, than I can to the contrary, thou liest under a manifest disadvantage ; since I profess, with our holy Prophet and all the Mussulmans, that the Alcoran contains nothing repugnant to the law of Moses, but is only a more perfect and complete idea of the Divine will : And that, as Moses was the Lawgiver of the sons of Isaac, so Mahomet was the Apostle of the sons of Ismael, and the seal of all the Prophets.

Use thy own reason, and rather be of no religion, than in the number of those to whom it shall be said at the last day, ‘ Drink, ye worshippers of Ozair, and be damned for ever.’

Paris, 10th of the 9th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XXI.

To Dichieu Hussein, Bassa.

THERE has been a mighty quarrel of late between the French and Spanish Ambassadors at the Hague about precedency. The occasion was this: One evening the French Ambassador was riding in a coach, in a place where the Spanish Ambassador met him in another coach, and, both striving for the upper hand, they met with their horse's heads one against another, and so stood still. There was presently a tumult of people gathered about them : And, the French being more respected, many Gentlemen came in to his side with swords and pistols ; and all things seemed to portend a combat. But the Magistrates, having notice of this disturbance, sent some of the guards to keep the peace, and to defend the Ambassadors from any attempts of the rabble. In the mean while, several great Lords walked to and fro between the Ambassadors, proposing expedients of accommodation : But, it being at the very
junction

junction when the French Ambassador had received the news of the surrender of Montméli, he would not in the least yield to any terms. So that, at the last, the Spaniard was forced to drive out of the way, thinking it a matter of sufficient triumph, that he had stopped the French Ambassador so long.

There is a post come in from Denmark, which brings news of the total destruction of Itzchow by fire. This was a town belonging to the Danes, and was fired by the King of Sweden's order. The Danes are very unfortunate of late years; they make no figure in Europe. There is a period set to the grandeur of every kingdom and state, and the Danes were once very victorious and formidable; but now their monarchy declines apace, to make way for the rising lustre of the Swedes.

By sea the Dunkirkers make a great noise: They have lately taken from the French twenty merchant-vessels, and from the English near half that number; but, if they have not better fortune than their neighbours, the French will take their city from them ere long. Every campaign makes a fair advance towards it. I sent an account already to the Kaimacham of the surrender of Montméli, one of the most important places in Christendom. Now I acquaint thee, that S. Venant, which has not so great a character, yet considerable enough, yielded upon articles. This was done on the 28th of the last moon. At this rate the French priests will have little else to do, but to sing Te Deum for their repeated successes and victories.

From Portugal we hear that Court, to secure themselves the better against the Spaniards, have sent to implore the assistance of Morocco and Fez, which is much censured among the Nazarenes. Others say they are only messengers gone to buy up all the horses they can get in that country.

In the mean while the King of France is taking all the politick measures he can for the empire of the West. His Ambassadors in Germany appear with a magnificent train of three hundred men; and they
style

style their Master 'His most Christian Majesty, King of France and Navarre, Sovereign Prince in Germany and Italy;' which last is looked upon as a fair step to the title of Emperor.

The Councils of the German Court are not a little disturbed to hear that our invincible forces are approaching towards the confines of Hungary. It will put some stop to the designed election. Besides, they cannot agree among themselves about a Successor.

The Queen Christina of Sweden is come back again into this kingdom, being frightened out of Italy a second time by the return of the plague.

There is a war commenced between the city of Munster and the Bishop of that place; so that he has laid a formal siege to it, and presses them very close.

All this is of no such importance as the news that I receive from Constantinople, which assures me, that the Mussulmans have retaken the isles of Tenedos and Lemnos, though with some loss of men,

I wish they could as easily drive the Venetians out of the Archipelago, and then the Imperial city would have no longer reason to complain for want of bread.

Paris, 10th of the 9th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XXII.

To Dgnet Oglou.

I Know not what is the matter, but most of my friends are of late grown strange to me. They write but seldom, and then their letters are full of reserves, as if they suspected my integrity: Or, because that I am commanded to inform the Divan of all criminal practices, therefore they are afraid

to communicate their sentiments with the same freedom as formerly, though on themes no ways belonging to the state, but purely speculative, and the common discourse of all sensible men. Are you become more morose and rigid at Constantinople than you were twenty years ago? In those days, I remember it was common, in the publick Coffee-Hans, for Mussulmans, Greeks, Curds, and Franks, or men of any other religion, to meet together and vent their thoughts with liberty: No man being willing to be stigmatised with the character of a clown for taking offence at another's faith, though different from his own.

It was then esteemed a point of gallantry to favour the Christians of all sects, and let them talk and act as they pleased, provided they blasphemed not God or his Prophet. And they themselves would have condemned any of their own party, who should have been guilty of such an immorality and affront to the established religion of the Mussulmans, and the general sense of mankind.

But why then is the same liberty retrenched now, and that among Mussulmans who are intimate friends? Is it not now as lawful for us to converse with one another by letter, or any other way, as it was then to enter into dialogues with Infidels? I would not encourage to imitate the bold and prophane efforts of their wit, who deny the being of a God, or utter blasphemies against his Messenger: The whole universe is an irrefragable testimony of an Ete. nal and Omnipotent Nature: And the Alcoran is an evident proof of the sanctity and indispensable commission of our holy Lawgiver. But I hope it is no crime to enter into speculations of things liable to controversy. At least, I will venture to disclose to thee my thoughts, who art the most agreeable of all my friends. I tell thee, my dear Dgnet, it appears to me ridiculous, and like the quarrels of children, for Mussulmans to wrangle about mere trifles in religion, and that the resigned to God should be zealous for the whimsies of men.

One

One party believes the Alcoran is eternal; another says, it is created. In my opinion, they are both absurd assertions. The first, because then it will follow that there are more Eternals than one, which is a fair step to polytheism and idolatry: The second is only an impropriety of speech; for we do not usually say of any writing, that it is created but penned.

I can easily believe the manifold descents of Gabriel from Heaven, when he brought down the hundred and four sheets of science and faith. But, whether Adam had only ten of these sheets, or one-and-twenty as some say; or whether his son Seth had but twenty-nine of them, or fifty according to others; is not material according to my faith. It is possible Edris had no more nor less than thirty, and Abraham, our father, just ten of these divine manuscripts. Of these we are sure, that the volume of the Law was sent to Moses, the Psalms to David, the Gospel to Jesus the son of Mary, and the mighty Alcoran to Mahomet the seal of the Prophets.

It is easy for me to believe the celestial pen, with which all these manuscripts were written, to be of some admirable substance. But why it should be made of pearls rather than of diamonds, or any other jewels, I see no reason: Or that it should be a journey of fifty years, for the swiftest horse in Arabia, to run from one end of it to the other. Yet, if I have not faith enough for these things, I will not be angry with those that have. Let every man enjoy his fancy.

But I cannot be so indifferent when I hear men tell me, that God has a body like ours, with eyes, ears, nose, hands, tongue, and all other members, and organs of life, sense, speech, and motion; that he is subject to passions of love, hatred, anger, grief, and all the affections that are common to mortals. Yet, thou knowest there is a sect of Mussulmans who believe all this, and preach it to others with great assurance. What is this, but to set up an idol in the place of God? For the original of all idolatry

try was the vain presumption of men, who represented the incomprehensible Divinity under some uncommon visible figure of men or beasts.

If we must assign a body to God, it would seem more rational to adhere to their opinion among the Sephatim, who say his body is infinite, uncircumscribed, and beyond all form. Neither is it of any import, that the Western philosophers assert it is of the essence of all bodies to be circumscribed and finite. Since, though this may be readily granted true of particular bodies, yet must it ever be denied of the immense and universal body out of which the world is formed: Unless they will allow it unlimited and indeterminate unbodied space, which is more unintelligible and absurd. Doubtless, if the eternal Mind has a body, it is expanded wide as the endless æther, and equally present in all places: Neither can this body be any more circumscribed, confined, or shut up in any place, than the light of the sun can be restrained within a room, or separated from its source, by drawing of a curtain. For all the world is pervious to this infinite body, which is altogether indivisible into parts, even as that which we call a spirit. In a word, we must conceive it to be simple and uncompounded, the finest and fairest matter of the universe.

But, if thou wilt have my opinion, all this is infinitely too low and narrow an idea of that eternal and most exalted Essence, that intellectual beauty, which no mortal eye has seen, no tongue nor pen can describe; the smallest glimpse of whose ineffable Majesty, falling in the thought of holy men and Prophets, snatches away their souls in sacred passions and divine ecstasies, whilst their bodies are in the custody of the angel of death. At such times they are carried up through the seven heavens, beholding all the wonders, and the purple sea, which divides the first heaven from the second. They pass by the orbs where fire, hail, snow, and thunder are prepared and kept in reservoirs against the day of calamity; being guarded by spirits of vengeance, who are created

ated to punish Infidels. Then they ascend to the fourth heaven, where dwell innumerable armies of holy ones: Next to the fifth, where are the angels of intercession. Then to the sixth, which is the residence of archangels, the internuncio's or messengers of the eternal Majesty. At last of all they are introduced into the presence of the most sublime Potentates and Principalities, who wait before the recess of the Creator in the Heaven above all Heavens, whose height transcends the power of eternal intellects to measure.

O Dgnēt, when I have said all I can, it is nothing to the purpose! For no word nor thoughts can reach that Infinite above all infinity. Nothing but pure unbodied minds can have access to the skirts and borders of that endless region of light.

Therefore let us not stretch our vain imaginations, nor greedily pry into those secrets which for ever fly from human thoughts: But, keeping ourselves within the bounds of reason and society, let us adore God, and believe his Prophet, obey the law of clearness and purity, without injuring man or beast; and that is the way, if there be any, to ascend to the vision and enjoyment of that happiness which at present is hid from us.

Paris, 5th of the 11th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER XVI.

To the Aga of the Janizaries.

I Received the dispatch coming from valorous hands, an express perfumed with Narcissus, full of honourable words, and exhibiting a command worthy of an Ottoman General. May the Angel of Fortitude conduct thee in all thy expeditions against Infidels, Rebels, and Hereticks.

Thy conceptions of the present state of Europe are very proper and lively : Yet, in some things, it is possible thou hast been misinformed. The affairs of Italy are inconsiderable, when compared with the more important wars in the North. That quarter is at present the theatre of the most remarkable actions ; yet the campaigns in Flanders this year have made some noise in the world.

But all the discourse at present is of the famous siege and taking of Frederic-Ode by the Swedes. This is a fortress belonging to the King of Denmark, and esteemed one of the strongest in Europe. Yet it was taken by storm ; wherein the Danes lost ninety-three principal Officers, and about three thousand common soldiers ; thirty-three colours ; seventy-seven great guns of iron and brass ; three hundred and eighty-two barrels of powder ; forty thousand musquet bullets ; six hundred granadoes ; three thousand pikes, and two thousand two hundred suits of armour.

This victory makes the Swedes appear terrible to their enemies ; and they are looked upon as the only flourishing nation in the North, as France is in the West. Yet, to shew that there is no mixed happiness here below, their interest had been much lessened by the desertion of the Brandenburgers, who now seem to favour the cause of King Casimir.

That Monarch had an interview lately with the Elector of Brandenburg at a place called Brandenburg ; where they embraced one another, banquetted together, and buried all the memoirs of enmity in generous computations : For this is the way of the Northern Princes of Europe, who live in so cold a climate, that nothing less than a debauch of wine can thaw their frozen souls, and melt them into an obliging humour.

As for the state of England, I perceive thou knowest the character of Oliver, the new Sovereign of that commonwealth. Yet I can inform thee, that he begins to change his temper. There are persons in his Court who give constant intelligence to

to the King of France of all his secrets. And as the exiled King of Scots could not snuff a candle in a passion, but that Usurper had knowledge of it; so neither can Oliver have a dream, but some spiteful Mercury carries the news into foreign countries. His sleep is interrupted with fearful visions of plots and treasons against his life; which makes him change his bed five or six times a night. They say he is metamorphosed from a hero to a perfect coward. And this is not the report of the multitude, who take things upon trust; but it is the sport of the French Grandees who wish well to the son of the late murdered English King.

I must be irregular in my method of writing, that I may oblige thee with military remarks. A more particular account of the storm of Fredericks-Ode is just come to my hands, wherein we are assured, that it was taken at the first assault, which much redounds to the honour of General Wrangle; and that the Crown-Marshal of Denmark, with many Senators and Grandees, fell by the edge of the sword, and that two thousand captives were driven yoked in couples like beasts, as an augmentation of the Conqueror's triumph.

Thou wilt not be displeased at the little coherence and order of these memoirs, considering that it suits well enough with the subject; for I write *à la Campagne*, as the French say, and so am obliged to entertain thee with broken detachments of news, from several parts, as occasion offers.

The Spaniards are stark mad for the loss of Mardyke, which was taken by the English and French in the 9th moon, and all the garrison sent prisoners to Calais. They swear they will have this important place again, whatever it costs them. The Prince of Conde lies dangerously ill of a fever at Ghent: Whilst Don John of Austria labours under a malady of another nature, being much distressed for want of money to pay his soldiers. This is looked upon as a very bad symptom in a General of an army.

Wouldest thou know what the meaning of this is? I will tell thee in brief; I am in a controversy with myself, whether I had best die or live.

Wonder not at the expression; as if it were in any man's power to make this choice; since, according to the Mussulmans faith, we cannot hasten or retard the moments decreed by fate. Assuredly, predestination does not in the least interfere with what is called man's free-will. Every the most voluntary action of our lives complies as exactly with the appointment of eternal destiny, as the accidental fall of a tile off a house, or a more regular and constant descent of rain, snow, and hail from the clouds. And for aught I know, we may as properly call it the free-will of a river to run towards the sea, as for a man to pursue the various currents of his own reason or appetite. For so a fountain frequently divides itself into many streams, before it falls into the ocean, which is its center. ~~And man himself, notwithstanding the boasted free-~~dom of his will, is as much confined to act according to his principles, prepossessions, prejudices, passions, and habits, as the different rivulets issuing from the same spring are restrained each within the ~~limits~~ of its proper channel.

But, not to entertain thee with more allegories, both thou, and I, and all men find ourselves violently carried away by certain inclinations so forcible as no power of our will is able to resist: Sometimes our love, hate, joy, grief, and so the rest of human passions, are as voluntary as the motions of our pulse. And though, in the most important actions of our lives, we generally form some regular design, as their scope and center; yet we do many things without reflection, as musicians are sometimes said to play excellent tunes, without so much as regarding or thinking what they are about. By which it is evident that our will has little to do in the conduct of our lives. We, like all other creatures, act according to certain secret impulses of nature. The very same faculty, which we call instinct in the beast,

is no other than what we term reason, wisdom, knowledge, discretion, and forecast in ourselves. And I think it is no solecism to say, that that was a prudent dog, who, perceiving his master making ready a rope to hang him, slipped slyly away, and never came near him more.

Suffer me to make yet a farther digression, and ascribe it to fate. For I am on a sudden strangely interrupted in my thoughts by a most furious tempest; a medley of hail, rain, lightning, and thunder: And this last, though not over-noisy and loud, yet it was the most singularly terrifying that ever I heard in my life. There is a sort of thunder which they call the drum, because it approaches near the sound of that warlike instrument, making a lively, fierce rumbling in the air, like the beat of an alarm. There is another more surprising, like the roaring of cannon; but this had a touch in it of the most harsh, affrightening, and irregular noise that ever shook the welkin.

I was possessed with a deep melancholy, as soon as I heard the horrid clatter begin, and saw the air darken apace, with a more than ordinary gloominess: Then I felt some religious passions struggling with my reason. I was full of fears, lest God was angry with me, for my counterfeited life among the Christians: And imagined no less, than that this tempest was raised on purpose to destroy me, and make me an example to all Mussulmans, who dare deny the holy Prophet, to serve the interest of the Grand Signior, as much a mortal as themselves. Or, at least, I concluded I should taste my share of the wrath of Heaven at this cholerick juncture. Nay, and all the philosophy I could muster together served but to raise my dismal expectations of the fatal blast. For I could not avoid thinking, that a wicked man is a magnet which naturally attracts the vengeance of Heaven; and that I, being such in the highest degree, could not fail of having my soul scorched up at once to nothing, or metamorphosed to a fury (which is worse) by some surprising and inevitable flash.

For to pass from this life by lightning, poison, or an earthquake, are the only deaths I fear.

I fell on my knees and face, addressing myself to God with the most humble and fervent devotion I was capable of. I made my application also to his Prophet. I said and did all that I thought would procure a respite of the punishment I feared. At length, being tired and sick of too much prayer, I rose and sat down cheerfully, remembering I was a Mussulman, and resigned to the will of Destiny: Considering also that I was an Arabian, of a noble stock, I resolved, if I must die, to prepare myself with a moderation worthy of my blood, that so I might go to the Invisibles like the grandson of an Emir.

... Perhaps, thou wilt impute this to vanity: But I esteem it a point of justice for a man to take care that he may live and die like himself, without degenerating from the virtue of his ancestors, or bringing a disgrace on the tribe to which he belongs: For, though God has created all men of the same mould, yet he has distinguished one family from another by more than specifick characters imprinted on them in their nativity, and has ennobled some mortals with peculiar qualities and innate perfections which others are wholly strangers to: So there are others remarkable for hereditary vices.

Whether these things depend on the blood, or on the different circumstances of souls before they came into these bodies, is a question not soon resolved: But this I am sure of, that I find in myself both some virtues and vices, which I could never yet discover so oddly blended together in any other mortal. I am always campaigning on the frontiers of good and evil; yet my passions are not mercenary: No Prince can tempt me to treason or perfidy. I am master of a certain fastness of spirit, which no human charm is able to dismaunt. My integrity cannot be warped by gold: And it is for this reason I a little value myself. Which makes me sometimes inclined rather bravely to fall forth into the un-

known world, than tarry in this, where I meet with nothing but contempt and disesteem from the slaves of him, for whose sake I bear the fatigues of life. Surely, think I, wherever it be my lot to go, after my escape from this mortal stage, the spirits of that region will be kind to me for my incorruptible trustiness; for they have intrigues as well as we, and, consequently, will be glad of a faithful agent.

In a word, since all my zeal and loyalty are thought not to merit any reward in this life, I would fain try, whether at least I may not deserve to be a ghost of honour, if there be any such distinctions in that world of spirits.

Paris, 27th of the 11th Moon,
of the Year 1657.

LETTER II.

To Mustapha, Bassa.

I SHALL acquaint thee with a late transaction in this kingdom, which, I believe, has but few examples. The Kaimacham has already received a dispatch from me, wherein I signified the return of Christina, Queen of Sweden, into France: This Princess, since her arrival at Fontainebleau, having discovered some secret treachery in one of her retinue, who was an Italian Marquis, pronounced a formal sentence of death on him: Which was accordingly executed on the 10th day of the 11th moon, by her own Officers, in a gallery of her palace, after he had been warned of it by her express order, and had a Confessor sent to him to prepare him for another world.

When this was done, she immediately sent a messenger to acquaint the French King with this action, and the reason which induced her to it. Some of the Courtiers at first persuaded him, that the Queen's

proceedings intrenched on his royal prerogative, he being the sole arbiter of life and death within his own dominions: Whereupon Mons. de Chaunet was sent to expostulate with her. I have formerly mentioned this person in some of my letters, when he was Ambassador from this Court to Queen Christina, then reigning in Sweden. He is a Gentleman of great abilities: And for that reason he has been employed in the most difficult negotiations with the States of Holland and other countries.

Yet people censure variously; and the case has been referred to the Doctors of the civil law, who pronounced this sentence in her favour, 'That, being an independent Sovereign, and, having the King of France's permission to reside in this realm, the rights of Sovereignty could not be denied her over her own subjects: Such are to be esteemed all that are in her service and take her pay, except the subjects of the State where she resides.'

The swift execution of this Queen's sentence on her servant, in part, resembles the rigour of our Eastern justice, which admits of no delays in punishing of criminal persons, and removing traitors out of the way; neither is it to be diverted by any fear of after-claps. And, though these Western Monarchs generally put no man to death without a formal process at law, yet sometimes they have leaped over this rule, and only gave the word of command to some of their Officers, and the business was done: As in the cases of the Marshal de Ancre and the Duke of Guise; the one falling by a pistol-bullet, the other by the stab of a dagger; and both in the King's own palace, surrounded with their servants and friends. And there was no other way for the Crown of France to secure itself from the attempts of these dangerous men, who were grown to such a height, as to monarch it almost as much as their Master.

Mighty Bafia, the charms of Sovereignty are very strong, creating envy and ambition in subjects, and jealousy in Princes. It is not safe for an eminent Grandee

Grander to appear too popular; for he that is invested with a diadem can never brook a rival, or one whom he has reason to suspect for such.

Paris, 15th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1654.

LETTER III.

To Mustapha, Berber Aga.

THE Spaniards are all dissolved in joy for the birth of a young Prince and heir of that declining monarchy. It is said that the King his father appointed a solemn festival throughout all his dominions, commanding his subjects to celebrate it with the most exalted demonstrations of joy: And, on that day, he himself wore the ransom of Kings in his apparel, the very diamonds and pearls in his hat being valued at three millions of gold: By which thou mayest guess at the rest.

He has also communicated the joyful news to all Christian Princes and States, his friends and allies. And, indeed, he has some reason to make a noise of this good fortune, being an old man, and, in all men's opinions, not likely to have any more children.

His Ambassadors in foreign countries endeavour to imitate their Prince in all manner of magnificent triumphs, and particularly from Holland we have the following account: That, on a certain day of this moon of January, Don Stephano da Gamara, the Spanish Ambassador at the Hague, caused Te Deum to be sung with excellent voices and musick, whilst fifty pieces of ordnance played continually. At night a hundred and fifty pitch barrels were lighted on several scaffolds in the streets, and all the windows in the Hague were illuminated with wax ta-

pers;

pois; and these words were seen flaming in an artificial fire-work for two hours together:

‘ ParVe, ut Magne PHILIPPE,
‘ Prospere, proCeDe, & regna.’

I need not explain this inscription to thee, who art versed in the Roman language; and wilt find that all the salt of these words lies in the capital letters pointing at the year wherein the young Prince was born, viz. MDCLVII; except a little pun upon his name, which is Philip Prosper. On each side appeared the arms of the Spanish King; and, underneath, the Golden Fleece, so artificially contrived, that from it sprung fountains of divers kinds of wine, at which the multitude drank liberally for several hours: Whilst many new-coined pieces of gold and silver were scattered among them out of the Ambassador’s windows. They were stamped with an olive-tree, having this motto on one side:

‘ Crescente hac, Pax aurea crescet.’

And on the other side a hand, with this inscription in a label,

Dabit Populis Pacem.

The French ridicule this motto, and say the King of Spain will, ere long, deserve the title of Peacemaker, when he shall be forced to sue for it, not being in a condition to carry on a war.

Illustrious Officer, I know thou art well versed in the Roman histories, having been educated under Achmet Lala, who was a learned man. And it is probable thou art no stranger to the more modern relations of Europe, and the divers characters of the people that inhabit it. Yet, give me leave to tell thee, that Rome, in all its victorious bravery, never saw a firmer soldier in a battle, than the Spaniards are at this day; but the French have finer wits, more money, and better fortune; and it is this makes them insult. Besides, Destiny over-rules all things. Every kingdom and empire has its climactericks, wherein

wherein it droops, declines, and, at 'the grand critical period, falls to ruin.

The Greeks had money enough, when the great Sultan Mahomet besieged Constantinople: But they had not wit to use it for their own preservation; and so that city, the last considerable stake of the empire, was lost to the Ottomans, who soon after became Masters of all the rest.

Thou hast wealth in abundance, and discretion to manage it: Slip no opportunities, but remember the old Arabian proverb which says, 'God has given whole days to the fortunate, but to the unhappy he affords only some hours.'

Paris, 17th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER IV.

To Pesteli Hali, his Brother, Master of the Grand Signior's Customs at Constantinople.

I Remember my promise, though it be late. Thou knowest I have many hindrances, and therefore wilt not tax me with feigning an excuse. However, thy letter came to me in a good hour, to put me in mind of these things, and to inquire of our mother's health, who still resides in this city.

I have said nothing of her since my first letter after her arrival at Paris. And, to tell thee the truth, she has said little herself, being ignorant of the French tongue, and too old to learn it. Therefore her chief conversation has been with Eliachim and me, above these three years: For that Jew speaks indifferent good Turkish and Arabick.

If thou wouldest know how she has spent her time, it is divided between her devotions and her needle. She lives more recluse than a Christian nun, seldom or never stirring abroad, unless to take the air of the fields,

fields, and then shut up in a coach with her maid. In a word, her manner of living is a fit example for the French women: For, in all things, she observes the law of her education, and the modest customs of the East.

No argument can persuade her to change her Grecian garb, or dress herself after the loose mode of Western females. Neither will she eat or drink any where, but in the house of Eliachim, for fear of infringing the precepts of the Alcoran, and disobeying the Messenger of God: For she esteems the diet of the Jews pure, and free from pollution. In her pious motherly zeal she rebukes me for eating and drinking with Infidels: And I have nothing to say in my defence, but the necessity I lie under of preventing suspicion, that so I may serve the Sultan with greater success, and that I have the Musti's dispensation for this and many more irregularities. When she hears this, she lifts up her eyes to Heaven, lays her hand upon her breast, and appears resigned: Yet shakes her head, and seems to pity my case; not without some reflections on the corruption of the times, the impiety of the Seraglio, and want of zeal for the holy Prophet.

She has her health to a miracle: And, excepting the first two moons after she came to Paris, I never heard her complain of the least indisposition. It is possible the change of air, with the inconveniencies of travelling so far by sea and land, might incommode her at first. She was for a while troubled with rheums, obstructions, and a dysentery: But she soon overcame these distempers, and has ever since been perfectly well.

We often discourse together of thee and thy travels in the East. Sometimes I read part of thy journal to her, which affords her infinite delight. She congratulates herself and thy good fortune in escaping so many perils and deaths as every-where threaten a stranger: And takes a particular delight to hear thy adventures with the Indian Lady, at the Court of Raja Hulacu. Thou mayest be assured

our mother bears a singular affection to thee ; for we never meet without wishing thee in our company. She rejoices mightily to hear of thy prosperity and advancement in the favour of the Grand Signior and his principal Ministers ; wishing thee every day a new step of honour and interest. Thou mayest also rest satisfied that Mahmut comes not short of the affection he owes to such a brother.

At other times we talk of our cousin Isouf, who is now in the frozen regions of the North. His itinerary memoirs are also very pleasant ; and we pass some hours in reading and comparing them with the dispatches which I frequently receive from Mehemet, an exiled Eunuch in Egypt. For Isouf is more large in his description of that country, and his remarks on its antiquities, than any other part of Africa. Yet he says enough of that southern quarter.

As to what I promised to inform thee concerning the pyramids, mummies, and other singularities of Egypt, know that our kinsman Isouf is a great critic, and gives the lye to Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo, Pliny, and other writers of Greece and Rome. Neither will he consent in all things to our Arabian histories.

He says, the pyramids are neither so high, nor does their basis take up so much ground, as is reported by the ancients. He laughs at those who affirm they cast no shadows at noon, having experienced the contrary when the sun was in Capricorn. And we may believe him in this, on good grounds ; For it is recorded of Thales Milesius, who lived about two thousand years ago, that he took the height of these pyramids by their shadows.

There are three of these admirable structures not far from Cairo, and about eighteen more in the deserts of Lybia. It is generally supposed, that they were built for the sepulchres of the Egyptian Kings, some of them before the flood, the rest after. There are not wanting historians who assert the greatest of the pyramids to be the tomb of Seth, the son of Adam.

Isouf

Isouf was within this mighty fabrick, and attests, that, after he and his company had descended and ascended through certain galleries, they came at last to a square chamber walled about with pure Thebaick marble; in the middle of which was a chest of the same stones, which, when struck with the foot, sounded like a musical instrument. It is believed that in this chest was laid the body of the King who built that pyramid.

The ancient Egyptians were of opinion, that, even after that which we call death, or the separation of the soul and body, there were certain arts to retain them together; if not in so strict an intimate an union as before, yet in a very familiar correspondence for many ages. So that the soul should always take delight to hover about the body, and to exercise its faculties in the place where that was reposed.

For this reason, in the first place, they took out the bowels, and whatsoever was most liable to corruption: And, having washed the empty belly with wine of palms, mixed with aromattick powders, they stuffed it with myrrh, cassia, and many costly confections, and then sewed it up. After this, they purified the whole body with nitre; and, having drawn out the brains by the nostrils with a hook, they filled up the skull with melted gums. And, last of all, they swathed up the whole body in silk, smearing it over with rich mixture of bitumen, spices, and gums, and so delivered it to the kindred to be laid up in the sepulchre.

These are the preparations they made to court the presence of the soul, by rendering the body for ever sweet and incorruptible. And, that the majesty of royal ghosts might never be interrupted or violated by the neighbourhood of vulgar spirits, or the ruder approach of mortals, Kings built these magnificent piles, as the palaces of their last repose. It is therefore they were erected in desarts and unfrequented places, and in such a form as was esteemed the most durable and secure from the injuries of time, the assaults of the elements, and from the com-

mon

mon fate of all human enterprizes. Each stone is of a prodigious bulk, and rivetted to the next with a bar of iron: which, with the strength and invincible fastness of the cement, renders it a thing impossible for any of these pyramids to be demolished, though all mankind were set to work for many successive generations.

Al Mamun, the Caliph of Babylon, attempted to do it, but in vain. For, after he had set his men to work, and been at vast expences, they made but one small breach so inconsiderable, that, being made sensible it would exhaust his treasures, to remove but the hundredth part of the pyramid, he desisted, full of wonder at the wisdom of the founders.

If it be true, that the soul may, by such allurements as these, be prevailed on to remain with the body in its sepulchre, and that a man's future happiness consists in this, I should myself admire and imitate those Egyptian sages. I would, in my lifetime, build me a small mausoleum, according to my ability, and order in my last will and testament, that my body may be embalmed and condited for a perpetual duration. But, if none of these arts can alter the decrees of Destiny, or force an immortal spirit, from ranging where it pleases, I must conclude with Pliny, that this celebrated wisdom of the Egyptians was no other than glorious folly, and all the magnificence of their Kings, in building such costly sepulchres, but royal waste.

They themselves, in thus cautiously providing to secure the soul's abode with the body after death, tacitly owned, that, by the course of nature, it would immediately pass into some other. Nay, the transmigration of souls was an established doctrine in Egypt. How then could they be so blind as to imagine a dead carcase, however perfumed and fenced against corruption, was more inviting than an embryo formed to live? Or, that it was more eligible for the soul to be imprisoned in a dark dungeon (for no better are the insides of the pyramids) than to enjoy the light of the sun, moon, and stars, and the
various

various sweets of the element? Brother, in my opinion, it were better to be a bird, a worm, a fly, or any living thing, than to be thus immured for many ages, and have no other companion but an old salted mummy.

Isof has made some remarks on the river Nile, to which, he says, Egypt owes not only its corn and fruits, but also the very soil which brings them forth. For every year, at the time of inundation, that river brings along with it from *Aethiopia*, or some other regions through which it passes, abundance of slime and mud, with which it covers all the land of Egypt, leaving it behind at the decrease of the waters; so that the soil of Egypt is borrowed from other countries. And, if this be true, for aught we know, the place of its situation may be borrowed from the sea, according to the opinion of some ancient philosophers.

Herodotus, Pliny, and others were of this persuasion, grounding their conjectures on the nearer approaches of the continent to the island *Pharos*, from the time of *Homer*, who exactly calculated its distance. And they concluded, that the immense quantities of slime, which the Nile transports from the mountainous regions of *Africa*, might in the space of two myriads of years have filled up all that part of the sea, which is now firm land, and called Egypt.

If this be true, it seems to be very strange, that the Egyptians should boast of greater antiquity than any other nation in the world, though their country itself be the youngest of all the regions on earth, an abortive spot of ground, hatched by a river in the depths of the sea, and ever since cherished by that river, as by a parent or nurse, which ceases not to convey to it yearly a convenient proportion of aliment, whereby the country itself grows in bulk, and the inhabitants are maintained. O admirable Providence of nature, who can penetrate into thy mysterious conduct? O Egypt, abounding in prodigies and wonders! Where the land and water, with

all

all other elements, conspire to render thee all over miraculous.

Dear Pesteli, I am transported, when I think of that region, and could relate a thousand more pre-fages, both out of Mous's memoirs, and from the mouth of others, who have travelled thither to observe so many miracles. But, I believe, thy patience will be sufficiently tired with the length of this letter. Besides, my mother is just come to visit me, and desires me to recommend her unfeigned affections to thee.

Be assured also, that Mahmut loves thee with the integrity of a man, and the tenderness of a brother: And he serves thee in all things without repining.

Paris, 17th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1698.

LETTER V.

To the Kaimacham.

THE Venetians are very angry for the loss of Tenedos; and not without reason; for that island is a delicate spot of ground, abounding in rich wines, and other products of nature: Besides, it commands the avenue of the shining city, the refuge of mortals.

They variously relate the manner of its being taken from them by the arms which no earthly power is able to resist. Endeavouring, in all their rumours, to disguise the truth as much as they can, and misrepresent the bravery of the Ottomans; that so the actions of their own Generals may make the greater figure.

These Nazarenes have a bad cause, and therefore are compelled to make use of shifts and equivocations to support it. They are quite degenerated from the integrity of the primitive followers of Jesus.

In a word, they make good the character of the ancient Candiots; of whom a certain Poet says, 'they are thorough-paced lyars, ravenous beasts, and gluttonous drones.'

It is believed in these parts, that, when the Venetians quitted the island, they departed not without revenge, setting fire to a mine, and blowing up several hundreds of the Mahometans into the air.

However, they have for ever proscribed and excommunicated Girolamo Loredan and Giovanni Contarini, in whose custody the chief fortresses of the island were, accusing them of cowardice and treachery: Offering also two thousand sequins to any that seizes on them within the dominions of Venice, and three thousand to him that kills them in another country.

I know it is in the power of the all-commanding Porte to protect these exiles, if they are within the territories of our Sovereign; much more, if they shelter themselves in that sanctuary of the distressed. But thou, and the other supreme Ministers, are best able to judge whether these Infidels merit so great a favour.

Perhaps, their case may be like that of Nadaft, Governor of Buda, when Solyman the Magnificent besieged that city. For Nadaft was a man of invincible courage and fidelity, but was betrayed by the soldiers, who bound him in chains, and delivered up the city and castle to the victorious Sultan. That brave hero, understanding their treachery, and the resolution of Nadaft, set him at liberty, and presented him with noble gifts; but commanded the perfidious garrison to be cut in pieces; a due reward of their treason. For, though Princes often make use of traitors to serve their own designs, yet, when the work is done, they commonly pursue the hated instruments, with the effects of a just contempt and indignation.

Plutarch, the Greek historian, abounds with instances of this nature; so do Herodian and other Roman authors. But no example of punishment in this

this kind seems so proportionate, regular, and ingenious, as that which Brennus, King of the Gauls, caused to be inflicted on a virgin of Ephesus, who, when he besieged that city, promised to deliver it into his hands, on condition that his soldiers would bestow on her all the ornaments of gold, which they had plundered in the wars of Asia, and wore about them as trophies : For, when she had performed her contract, the wise General, to do his part, caused this virgin to sit down on the ground ; and then, every soldier in his army casting his plate into her lap, she was oppressed with the insupportable weight, and buried alive in a heap of gold.

I do not mention this as if the like were due to the Venetian Captains. I refer the judgment of such things to my Superiors, Ministers of the blessed sanctuary of mankind.

It is possible the Visirs of the Bench thought me dead or turned renegado, because they have not received any news from me these five moons. But I tell thee neither men nor devils can corrupt the faith of Mahmut. But, by the God of my vows, there is not a more trusty man in the universe.

All the reason of my silence was the height of the waters, which seemed to threaten the earth with a second deluge. Germany was a sea, and Flanders a lake, for above three moons together ; so that it was impossible for the post to travel. There were seen also strange spectres of fire in the air ; and the people of Brabant were alarmed with uncouth noises in that element.

Perhaps, illustrious Kaimacham, these are the last preparation to the grand cholick of nature, when wind, water, and fire shall strive to turn this world into its old chaos.

Paris, 3d of the 6th Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER VI.

To Solymán, his Cousin, at Constantinople.

MORE melancholy still ! Wilt thou have no compassion on thy exiled uncle, but harangue him to death with thy religious jargon ? Believe me, thy letters of this kind are as irksome to me, as the continual din and babbling of boys is to a poor, weary pedagogue. I forbid thee to write to me, and that as often as thou wilt : It is a comfort in my banishment to hear from those of my blood. But let me beg of thee to alter both thy theme and style. Leave spiritual things to the Mollahs and Imaums ; and let thy thoughts be taken up in things belonging to thy trade. In that be as inquisitive as thou canst. Bend thy mind wholly to make new discoveries and improvements in that, and it will turn to thy advantage. At thy hours of leisure, I counsel thee to read histories, and, sometimes, go into company : There is much to be gained by conversing with men of sense. Such will serve as mirrors, wherein thou mayest behold humanity in its proper figure, and the deformity of that vizard, with which error and superstition disguise our nature. They will correct thy mistakes without putting thee to the blush. Wit and reason shall flow from their tongues, as soft harmonies breathe from the pipes of an organ, which clear the spirits, and serene the heart that was clouded with sadness.

The imperial city is full of such, both natives and strangers. Call them out from the mixed multitude, and make them thy companions, without regarding the difference of religion, whether they be Mussulmans, Franks, Armenians, Jews, or others. Above all things shun the society of bigots ; and number not thyself among those who are opinionated, because they profess the True Faith : For what signifies that, if their lives be vicious ? I tell thee,

they are worse than the Infidels. Give no heed to fortune-tellers, and such as pretend to astrology; for, whilst they boast of knowing other mens fates, they are ignorant of their own. And, if there be any truth in that science, one may say their ignorance in it affronts the stars, and often provokes them to hasten their own ruin. Assure thyself they only amuse the world with portentous stories, to get fame and money.

Associate thyself with none but prudent and moderate men, whose morals are not leavened with a too furious zeal; who look not superciliously and with disdain on a Frank, as he walks along the streets; much less offer him an indignity, when he goes about his honest business, under the protection of the Grand Signior. It becomes none but Janizaries and russians to be guilty of these incivilities to strangers. The law of nations, and the particular commands of our holy Prophet, oblige us to treat such with all humanity and tenderness. Besides, it is reflecting on the justice and hospitality of the magnificent Porte, which is the refuge and sanctuary of all the earth, that a stranger cannot walk the streets in peace. Despise no man on the score of his religion; for there are no factions in Paradise: But consider, that, whilst thousands of Mussulmans shall go to hell for their wicked lives, so an equal number of those we call Infidels may be received into the mansions of the Blessed for their virtue.

Thou seemest to be much concerned for thy soul: Thy letter abounds with over-much care in this point. In being too solicitous, it is evident thy faith is small. Every line is tinged with sad expressions about the perils, snares, ambushes, hooks, gins, and I know not what other devices the devil has to ruin thy poor soul, as thou callest it. Cousin, Dost thou know what the soul is, about which thou keepest such a pudder? If thou dost, it is more than I do; and yet I have been searching and prying into it above these thirty years: I mean, from the time that I first began to think and consider of things:

But am as far to seek as ever I was. Neither could all the wise men of old, the philosophers and sages, for aught I perceive, agree in their verdict about this mysterious thing which we call the soul.

One will have it to be 'Only the finest part of matter in the body;' another says, 'It is the air which the lungs suck in, and diffuse through all our members.' A third sort affirm it to be 'A mixture of air and fire.' A fourth, 'of earth and water.' A fifth calls it 'A complexion made up of the four elements, a kind of quintessence,' and I know not what. The Egyptians called it 'A certain moving number:' And the Chaldeans, 'A power without form itself, yet imbibing all forms.' Aristotle called it 'The perfection of a natural body.' All these agreed, that it was corporeal, and as it were extracted from matter. The best definition among them is not worth an asser.

But there were men of sublime speculations, who affirm the soul to be 'A divine substance, independent of the body.' Of this opinion were Zoroaster, Hermès Trismegistus, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plutarch, Porphyry, and Plato. The last defined the soul to be 'a self-moving essence, endued with understanding.' But, when they have said all, I prefer the modesty of Cicero, Seneca, and others who acknowledged they were altogether ignorant what the soul is.

There was no less disagreement among the philosophers, about the seat of the soul. Hippocrates and Hierophilus placed it in the ventricles of the brain. Democritus assigned it the whole body. Strabo was of opinion it resides between the brows; Epicurus in the breast. The Stoicks lodged it in the heart, and Empedocles in the blood. Which last seems to be the most current opinion of the East to this day: In regard both Moses the law-giver of the Jews, and Mahomet our holy Prophet, asserted the same, and for that reason forbade flesh to be eaten with the blood.

But be it what it will, either corporal or incorporeal, a substance or an accident; whether it dwell in
the

the head of the
there is no
be a man
for the
it will be
books
it is a woman
from
the
the
the
the
the

2: THROUGHT
CROSS THE
FATHER THE
THE THE
THE THE
THE THE
THE THE
THE THE
THE THE
THE THE

SECRET

1. The first step is to identify the problem. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be improved.

Danes. The latter began it by a solemn proclamation, sending a Herald at arms to the Swedish Court, and dispatching Ambassadors to all his allies in Christendom, to give them an account of all his proceedings. Now I shall entertain thee with a short idea of this war, by which thou wilt comprehend, that the Danes are either much degenerated from the valour of their ancestors, who formerly made the most terrible figure of all the nations in the North : Or else they are less obliged to Fortune, who has not favoured them with so many successes and triumphs of late, but rather exposed them to the insults of their enemies, and the contempt of all men.

When the King of Denmark first proclaimed his war, he had a fair advantage of the Swedes, who at that time were sorely intangled between the Polanders, Germans, and Muscovites, and had more need of helps than hindrances. Yet, King Gustavus turning part of his forces into Holstein, Schonenland, and Jutland, he took one part after another, till he had over-run those provinces in the space of six moons : And reduced the Danes to a necessity of composition, and that on such dishonourable terms, as renders them the scorn of their neighbouring nations.

On the 13th of the 3d moon, the two Kings had an interview near Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark : For so far had the fortune of the Swedish arms carried their victories. They eat and drank together several times, and conversed privately some hours. At last a firm peace was concluded between them, and they concerted the measures of a perfect friendship.

But, before this, the Dane had been forced to yield up Schoneland, with Elsimberg, which commanded half the Baltick sea. He surrendered also the provinces of Blakin and Halland, with a very strong castle ; the island of Burtholme, ten ships of war, and obliged himself to pay a million of dollars, and to maintain four thousand horse and foot in the King
of

of Sweden's service, and give free quarter to all the Swedish forces till the 5th moon. These are such dishonourable articles, that the King of Denmark has quite lost himself in the esteem of all his allies. They call him a poor-spirited Prince, not worthy of support or assistance.

In a word, serene Bassa, it is like to fare with him as with other unfortunate men, who, when they are once falling, every body will help to throw them down. Therefore conserve thy honour as the only bulwark of thy interest and life.

Paris, 3d of the 6th Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER VIII.

To the Musti.

BY the faith of a True Believer, I swear the Christians are enemies to themselves, if they do not embrace the project of a certain Jesuit. They are no friends to their Messias, if they reject so regular an idea, so reformed a model of the Nazarene empire, as this sage has lately proposed to the Pope and the Cardinals.

He lays his foundation very deep, and draws his examples from the practice of Peter, the Prince of the first twelve-Christian Caliphs, whom the Franks call the apostles of Jesus the son of Mary. For, according to their traditions, the Messias, before he ascended to Heaven, left an exact pattern of the empire he designed to establish on earth. He divided this empire into twelve distinct provinces, according to the number of his apostles and vicars, assigning to each that quarter of the world where he was to preside, as Moses had formerly cantonised the holy region of Palestine among the twelve tribes that descended from Jacob.

But the happy son of Mary, being a far greater Prophet than Moses, or any that had gone before him; they say he would not be contented with diminutive territories, or dominions disproportionate to his ineffable descent and original. Therefore he resolved on the conquest of the whole earth; commanding his Vicegerents to disperse them through all nations according to a certain method, and proclaim his laws to every creature on the globe.

Venerable President of the Faithful, I relate these things, as I receive them from the mouths and pens of learned Christians, who may be presumed to know their own history. Thou wilt, perhaps, expect to hear of armies immediately raised; of camps, battles, and sieges; of devastations by fire and sword; storming of cities; and furnishing the more impregnable fortresses: In a word, I believe thou lookest for a relation of campaigns and victories more glorious than the achievements of the Roman Cæsars, more fortunate than the successes of Alexander the Great: But, I tell thee, all the registers and archives of the primitive Christians cannot furnish us with any memoirs of this nature.

Their Gospel mentions no warlike undertakings, not so much as the drawing the sword, by the son of Mary, or any of his followers, unless in a private rencounter, when Peter, the Lieutenant of the Messias, inflamed with a passion to see his Master betrayed by Judas, his Kahyar or Tasterd, and rudely assaulted by Malchus, a slave of the Jewish Musti, the valiant apostle drew his scymetar, and cut off the fellow's ear.

Believe me, O mysterious Doctor of the Mussulmans, I have perused the four histories of the life of Jesus, written by those who were eye-witnesses of his actions: And I find indeed that he once said to those of his retinue, 'I come not to send peace on earth but a sword.' Yet, by the sequel, it is evident, that, when he examined what weapons his followers had, and they told him but two swords, he seemed to be well satisfied, saying, 'It is enough; though

though a moment before he had him among them that had no sword sell his robe and buy one.

And I have seen a dispatch sent by Paul, one of the primitive Christian Caliphs, to the Nazarenes at Ephesus; wherein he counsels them to put on complete armour, as helmet, breast-plate, shield, buskin, sword, and the rest.

Besides these passages, or such-like, there is no military discourse throughout the book of the Gospel; much less any relation of battles, sieges, or any martial exploits. And the Christian Mollahs, or Doctors, interpret that letter of Paul's in a mystical sense.

Wilt thou know then, how the Messias and his apostles subdued the world: I will tell thee it was by exemplary virtue and good works, by miracles, and evident demonstrations of a supernatural power assisting them. For they spoke all languages, yet were most of them illiterate persons; they cured the deaf, the blind, the lame, and the paralytick, without the methods of surgery or physick. They cast out devils; raised the dead; and, finally, performed such and so many stupendous actions, that the world became captivated to their doctrines and laws, and willingly submitted to a yoke which seemed to come from Heaven. With divine eloquence, and the dint of irresistible reason, Peter the Prince of the Christian Caliphs, subdued the minds of his astonished auditory one day in Jerusalem; so that, before the sun went down, he gained five thousand proselytes. The fame of these things was soon spread through the adjacent countries and divers remote provinces; and the number of the converts was proportionably increased. In a word, all that embraced the faith of Jesus surrendered both themselves and their estates to be intirely disposed of at the pleasure of the apostles. So great and unreserved an attachment had they for the vicars of their God.

Now the forenamed Jesuit, considering these things, and comparing the state of those devout times with the libertinism, divisions, wars, and

general contempt of the priesthood among the Christians of succeeding times, and especially in this present age, attributes the source of all these evils to the ill conduct of the apostles themselves, and their successors in the primitive times, who did not sufficiently improve the advantages they were possessed of, when the pious multitude would willingly have made them Lords of all things. For, says he, by the same method and reasons might they have claimed the dominion over the estates of Kings and Emperors themselves, as over the goods and lands of the meanest proselytes: Since they were all equally sons of the church, and subjects to the discipline and laws of Jesus.

This Ecclesiastical Politician therefore mightily blames Pope Sylvester, who sat in the chair of Peter, when Constantine the Great became a Christian, being the first of the Roman Emperors who embraced that faith. He accuses him, I say, of weakness and a mean spirit, for accepting of that donation, which to this day is called the Patrimony of the Church, and comprehends all the temporal estates the Roman Pontiffs can boast of. Whereas he ought to have claimed an intire resignation of the whole Roman empire into his hands, as supreme Vicar of God on earth. This would have been a pattern, says he, to all the Kings and Princes of the earth, who thought fit to turn Christians. And so the dominions of the world had all fallen to the share of the priests.

Neither could it appear difficult, in his opinion, to have reduced the greatest Monarchs to such a forgetfulness and contempt of their royal birth and all the potent charms of a crown: Since the same rhetoric, which persuaded them to be followers of the Messias, would also have convinced them of the vanity of all earthly enjoyments, and of the obligations they had to be mortified, and to pursue their claims to diadems of a more exalted degree; the ineffable regalia of Paradise.

But

But since things are thus in their present state, and the Christian Princes retain their sovereignty, without any other dependence on the Pope, saving in matters purely religious; this Jesuit proposes, that the Roman Pontiffs would either first reform their own lives and court to the height of that primitive and apostolical purity, which shines so eminently in the earliest Governors of the church; and by that means persuade all the Monarchs in Christendom to become their subjects: Or else compel them by force to take the order of priesthood, and so turn their crowns into mitres, their kingdoms into ecclesiastical commonwealths, where all the publick offices of State, seats of Judicature, and, in fine, the whole system of the civil and political administration should be managed by the priests in a subordinate dependence one of another, according as their several characters required. By which means all Christendom would be soon united into one ecclesiastick Empire, whereof the Pope should be the supreme Head in temporals as well as spirituals.

What I have related is not only this man's private project, but the universal aim of his whole order: And thousands of other priests and dervises are caballing in all courts and countries of Europe to bring it to pass.

Venerable Esad, if God should suffer their contrivance to take effect, it is to be feared our wars with Christians would be as expensive and troublesome, if not more fatal to the Mussulmans interests, than when these Infidels formerly, laying aside their private feuds, banded together to conquer the Holy Land.

Paris, 25th of the 7th Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER IX.

To Abdel Melec Muli Omar, President of the College of Sciences at Fez.

I Received the paquet of venerable import, containing sacred counsels, and acceptable intelligence, replenished with noble memoirs, and illustrious remarks, sage precepts, and refined improvements in philosophy, and the mysterious sciences of nature.

With abundance of affection and joy I read the character of Musu Abu'l Yahyan, and the encomium of his wisdom and virtues. May a constellation of such lights always adorn that renowned college, and from thence disperse their learned influence and rays, not only through Africa, but over all the earth; that Fez may be numbered among the cities whose fame is sweet; that it may be ranked with Jerusalem the holy; Masre the ancient; Medina Talnabi the chaste; and the salutiferous Babylon; acquiring a peculiar title of honour, an attribute worthy of respect, when men shall every-where call it Fez, the Mother of Sciences.

My soul has been very inquisitive and restless for many years, and I think this is owing to my captivity in Palermo: For, before that, whilst I lived at ease in the Seraglio, basking under the warmer influence of royal Majesty, the sacred presence of the Grand Signior, who, like the sun gives motion, heat, and life to all things; I never regarded books, or once applied my mind to study any thing, but how to acquit myself in my station, and strengthen my interest at the Court; esteeming all other learning as barbarous, which conduced not to this end.

Foreign histories and languages were equally contemptible to me: I thought it beneath a Mussulman Courtier to give his tongue and mind the fatigue of any other dialect, save the Persian, Arabick, and Turkish:

Turkish: Or to load his memory with the records of other nations, designed to be the slaves of True Believers.

As to the speculative sciences, I was naturally desirous enough of knowledge. But I either had not leisure, or wanted books and other advantages of study. So that all the knowledge I could then boast of consisted only in some loose notions of logic and metaphysics which I had got by reading an old Arabian manuscript. And I thought myself historian enough, after I had perused the annals of the Ottoman empire, and now and then cast an eye on the Turkish translation of Herodotus and Plutarch.

It is true indeed, by conversing frequently with the Greeks, I soon learned their vulgar dialect: But this is far from being the polite language of the ancient Grecians: And a Page of the Treasury taught me the rudiments of Sclavonian; which afterwards I learned more perfectly, hoping it would be of some service to me one time or other.

All these were very superficial accomplishments; yet I thought myself happy enough without searching any farther. The pleasures and gaieties of a courtly life took from me the edge and gust with which I have since pursued more solid studies, and looked into the wisdom of the ancients.

But, when once misfortune had changed the scene of my life, and, instead of the honourable post I had in the Grand Signior's service, fate had rendered me a miserable abject slave in Sicily, I began to grow very thoughtful and pensive. The continual drudgery and labour I underwent soon mortified my former passions, and weaned me from all hopes of worldly honour: And the cruel stripes I daily received from that barbarous Infidel, my master, so broke my spirits, that servitude became familiar to me, and, despairing to be happy in this world, I was only ambitious to be wise.

I grew very contemplative: And, having acquainted myself with an honest carpenter in the town where we lived, who had a great many books

in his custody, he lent me several choice treatises ; and I borrowed all the hours I could from sleep, to peruse them with attention and profit. That carpenter pitied my condition, and did me many good offices of friendship, without other hopes of reward, save what he expected from God. By his means, I contracted a familiarity with two or three learned men, who spared no pains to instruct me in the Roman and ancient Greek languages, as also in the principles of philosophy. My master often beat me for this, attributing the neglect of his business to my bookishness (as he called it) and keeping the priests company. But all his severity could not abate my ardent thirst after knowledge, I still continued studying at certain seasons, till the happy hour of my redemption ; and then I frequented the academies. Ever since which time, I have neglected no opportunities of improving my reason ; yet find myself at this day much in the dark. There appears no certainty in any science but the mathematicks : All the rest are intangled with a thousand controversies and riddles ; which has made me turn sceptick in most things. Only I retain an inviolable faith for the Alcoran, and the book of prophetick doctrines and traditions. Next to these, I pay profound respect to the writings of Porphyry the philosopher, who seems to approach nearest to reason of all the ancient sages. His true name was the same as thine [Melech] which thou knowest in the Syriack signifies [King.] Whence his tutor Longinus, taking occasion from the usual colour of royal robes, called him Porphyrius, which in the Greek signifies one clad in purple. He was born at Tyre, the metropolis of the ancient Phoenicians. His pedigree was noble, and his education generous. Nature had also formed him for a sage, and Fortune favoured him with advantages enough. For, besides his first tutor, whom I have already mentioned (who was the greatest grammarian and orator of his time ;) Porphyry went to Rome, where he gained the friendship of Plotinus : And that philosopher accomplished him in the perfection of all sciences :

ences : So that he had power over the dæmons, and expelled the genius Atan, which infested certain baths in Rome. In a word, his doctrines appeared divine, and his actions more than human. Yet he himself, before his death, published a reverse of his former writings : Which is a sufficient argument, that there is no stability in the thoughts of mortals.

Therefore, since the wisest of men contradict themselves, and turn scepticks, tell me, O oracle of the age, why may not I ?

Paris, 20th of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER X.

To Murat, Bassa.

THERE has been something lately transacted between the French and the English, which seems a mystery. No-body here understands the meaning of it but the privadoes of the Cabinets. Yet every one guesses it is a fetch of Mazarine's wit. That Minister has more meanders in his brains, than an old Turkish gamester at chess ; who foresees no less than nine unavoidable consequences before he makes one bold motion : And, to be sure, the last shall be to his own advantage. In a word, Dunkirk, the strongest and most important sea-town of all the West, is surrendered by the Spaniards to the French ; and by these, as an earnest of friendship, is put into the hands of the English.

The little politicians of the city are amazed at it ; and the greatest Machiavels of the Court either cannot, or will not, inform them of the true secret.

You shall see two or three grave citizens brooding thoughts together over a box of polvita, and sneezing out their sentiments without reserve. Yet, after all their wise consult, they part as great fools as they met,
and

than could afterwards all my acquired knowledge of the precepts and maxims of virtue. For no sooner was I enjoying the study of morality, and taught to distinguish between good and evil, but my curiosity prompted me to examine the nature of the latter more closely than the bare speculation. I found myself more forcibly carried away by a secret pleasure to make experiment of what was forbidden, than to practise what was commanded: So prone is man to be jealous of his tutors, and to suspect those laws as impositions, which put a restraint on his native liberty.

Besides this, there are certain genial inclinations in every mortal, which the youngest, and he that is in his nonage, thinks he has as much right to gratify as the wisest senior. Nor can any reason easily persuade him to part with this privilege, but under the notion of being highly wronged; since every man naturally places his interest and happiness in pursuing the motions of his own will.

It is true, I never was prone to any enormous vices, or such as for their singularity would make the most hardened libertine blush, did he practise them to the knowledge of men.

I ever had an unconquerable abhorrence for those specifick acts of lasciviousness, which ought not to be named, and whose very idea makes the thought recoil: Yet am naturally amorous, and cannot but pay to beauty the sentiments and passions which are due from Platonick love. I admire symmetry and elegance wherever I discern them; and can stand gazing whole hours together on a flower, a tree, or a peacock. I am enamoured with the brightness of the sun; and, like another Endymion, I languish for a more intimate acquaintance with the moon. The lesser beauties of the night, the stars, inflame me with a thousand passions. I make my court to the whole host of heaven, yet, I hope, commit no idolatry. In fine, I am in love with the universe; and die hourly when I contemplate the glory of that transcendent

transcendent Essence, which is the root and source of all things.

These are passions not unbecoming a Mussulman. But I have some emotions for beautiful women more violent than all the rest, more dangerous and fatal. Tell me, O pious sylvan, how I shall gratify my love without offending virtue or the gravity of a man.

These creatures seem to be created for our perplexity; since a man can neither well be happy with or without them. They are perfect riddles: And to love them or hate them too much is an equal solecism. It were a question worthy of a philosopher, Whether this sex, among all the necessary good offices they do us, were not sent into the world as spies and trapani, to observe our councils and actions: And by mixing smiles with frowns, flatteries with reproaches, sullenness with more obliging favours, to keep us in a perpetual maze and labyrinth, lest the aspiring wit of men should, if left to themselves, attempt something more audacious than the poets feign of the sons of Titan, or the written law records of Nimrod and his companions, who built the Tower of Babel?

But whether they be spies, or faithful assistants, enemies or friends, I tell thee plainly, I have not been able to forbear loving them excessively. And this is part of the dream or trance out of which I am just now awaked.

Another scene is that of honour. This is a phantom also, a mere vapour, a shadow. I never hunted after glory, nor courted popular applause: Yet, being intrusted with the sublime secrets, and commanded to serve the Grand Signior in this station, I would fain acquit myself, without disgrace. Nay, like other mortals in such a post, I would willingly have the smiles of my Sovereign, and the caresses of happy Ministers who serve him, if it shall be my lot ever to return to the Seraglio. Nothing appears to me more terrible, than at such a time to
encounter

encounter with rugged, furrowed visages, or cold and faint embraces of my fellow-slaves.

This puts me upon a thousand inquietudes, makes me swear to contradictions, utter lyes and blasphemies which would turn the devil to a saint for fear. In a word, I stumble at no vice or immorality which may promote the cause I am engaged in : And all this for the sake of a fair character at the Porte : Whilst I am cajoling myself, as well as others, with a persuasion, that it is only on the score of honesty, and to acquit myself a good man. Thus I pursue a blast, a bubble, the idea of nothing, mere vanity, and an empty dream. And it is harder for me to shake off this enchantment than that of love.

Yet all this while I have not taken the French method to gain honour. I never was guilty of oppression and cruelty, nor bathed my hands in human blood. No widow or orphan mourns for what I have taken from them. Nor do I ever draggon any body into compliance with reason. All the parts I have acted of this nature were defensive ; pure efforts of self-preservation ; which, thou knowest, is a principle natural to all men, and even to the worms of the earth. These little reptiles, when they are trampled on, will turn again. And nothing more do I, unless in the Sultan's cause.

This puts me in mind of my integrity ; for I must tell thee my virtues as well as my vices. Neither Arabia, nor all the East, have ever brought forth a man more true to his trust, than honest, loyal Mahmut. I will for ever boast of this, in an age so full of treachery. This alone will carry me safe to Paradise, in spite of the Mollahs. As for the rest, they are only venial signs easily dropped off on the bridge of trial. And, so long as nobody can say I have betrayed my master's secrets, I am as safe as an angel that is not obliged to stand centinel at the lowest post of Heaven : For there he is within gun-shot of the devil.

Just

Just as I drew my pen from that word, a sudden noise in the streets called me to the window ; where turning my eyes from the earth to the moon and stars (for it was a very serene sky) I observed a small swift cloud to glide along from South to North, much in appearance like a bale of silk. It cleft the element like a sly Arab thief that swims for booty on the river Tygris. Wondering at this, when all the firmament was clear, and not another cloud above the horizon ; I soon concluded, it was the chariot of some airy God, a Mercury, or messenger sent with speedy news to the high Lords, Commanders of the Arctick regions, to bid them be upon their guard, or some such weighty matter. Perhaps, thought I, a war is commenced between the spirits of the poles : Or, it may be, King Æolus has sent a summons to the Northern winds, being resolved to play some royal pneumatick freaks upon the sea.

In good earnest, it made me reflect on our ignorance of the laws and constitutions of the elements. It put me in mind of the fogs and mists which sometimes envelope the globe in darkness, on purpose, for aught we know, to hinder us from seeing what is transacting at such seasons in the higher regions of the air. The spirits of those serene tracts may then be frolicking in visible forms, celebrating solemn festivals, and kindling all the meteors of the upper welkin, as natural fire-works and illuminations, not fit for mortals to behold, lest we should learn too much, and grow as wise as they. However, it made me very contemplative to see a single solitary cloud thus glide along the air : And I could have wished for wings to pursue its motions, because the appearance was not common.

Thou that hast measured the whole frame of nature, and taken the true dimensions of the world ; that hast penetrated into the secrets of the elements, and art always busied in the most sage and solid scrutinies ; wilt smile at the vanity of common mortals, such as I, who, when we are unintelligible to ourselves,

ourselves, yet presume to comprehend the ways of the Omnipotent, who is perfect in knowledge.

As for me, who have studied in the academies, and read Aristotle, Avicen, Plotinus, Averroes, with other philosophers, I esteem myself still but at the bottom of Pluto's cave, conversing with shadows, mistaken in every thing but the idea of thy sanctity and immense wisdom, which is imprinted on my soul, as those which the philosophers call first principles, because they are self-evident.

I designed to have said more to thee, but a sudden indisposition and extreme faintness have taken away my spirits. My limbs tremble, my head is giddy, my heart fails me: In a word, I seem like one between a mortal and a ghost.

Paris, 29th of the 8th Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER XII.

To Achmet Padishani Culligiz, Bassa.

THY surname argues thee a favourite at the Seraglio: And, for that reason, I know thou art accustomed to receive infinite submission and flatteries: But I must be as blunt with thee as I was with the new Musti, when I congratulated his accession to the chief patriarchate. I told that Prince of the Mussulmans Prelates, that I had no encouragement to welcome him to a dignity, which, though in itself sacred and inviolable, yet could not secure him from the persecutions of popular envy, any more than it did his predecessor. And the same I must say to thee.

Darnish Mehemet, Bassa, is fallen a victim to the rage of the multitude; and thou hast got his seat on the bench, Mayest thou enjoy it long, and never be mobbed out of thy honour and life as he was.

was. Some years ago he forbade me to write any more to him. What his reason was, I know not, neither did I ever inquire. However, I obeyed his injunction, being indifferent to whom I send my intelligence, provided I do the Grand Signior any service : For that end am I placed here."

Illustrious Bassa, I shall now acquaint thee with two the most principal points of the news stirring in Europe. One is the election of Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, King of Hungary and Bohemia, to the German empire. They have been canvassing this business eleven moons : And, at last, the Austrian faction carried it : This was done on the 8th of the 7th moon : And he was solemnly crowned on the 22d of the same. This has heightened the quarrel between the Duke of Bavaria and the Prince Palatine. The latter was so far transported with passion at the Diet of Frankfort, that he threw a standish of ink at the Bavarian Ambassador : Which is resented as an unpardonable affront : And the Duke is marching with an army to revenge it, or demand satisfaction. The Elector of Mentz has denied him a passage through his principality. And they are all like to be imbroiled in a civil war about it. This is no bad news for the Mussulmans.

But that which makes yet a greater noise is the death of Oliver, the Protector of the English Commonwealth ; who, whilst living, was the terror of all Europe. The superstitious, and such as regard signs, say this was presaged three moons ago, when a great whale, nine times as long as a tall man, was taken in a river of England, near the capital city, forty miles from the sea. I know not whether these kinds of observations are worthy of credit. Yet it seems the annals of that nation take notice, that the unusual appearance of a whale, so far within land, has always prognosticated some mighty change. Perhaps, the fate of illustrious personages affects nature with a more than ordinary passion, puts the elements into disorder, and inspires the brutes with sympathy.

We are assured, that, on the day of this Prince's death, and at the very hour of his departure, there was so violent a tempest of wind, rain, hail, thunder, and lightning, as had never been known by any man then alive in that nation : Which some interpreted to his dishonour, as if he were a magician, or, at least, a very wicked man ; and that this hurricane was raised by the devils, who transported his soul to hell. Whilst others affirmed this mixed storm to be only the sighs and tears of nature, the mournful passions of the guardian spirits of England, for the loss of so great and fortunate a hero ; and that the very inanimate beings consoled his death. As for me, I look on all these things as pure accidents, the effects of chance. I have an equal opinion of another circumstance, much observed both by his enemies and friends, that he died on the same day whereon he had formerly gained some notable victories : The one descanting on this to his reproach, the other drawing from it arguments of honour. It is difficult to say any thing of him without appearing partial. He had great virtues and no less vices. He was a valiant General and wise Statesman : Yet a traitor to his Sovereign. As for religion, though he professed himself a zealot, yet it is thought he was as indifferent as other Princes, who, for reasons of State, and to please their people, make a shew of piety, but in their hearts adore no other god but Fortune and Victory.

He was esteemed one of the greatest politicians of this age ; and none could match him but Mazarine. Yet, I cannot but smile, when I call to mind how both these eminent Statesmen were cheated this year by two or three fugitives.

A certain French Captain, named Gentilot, that had served under the States of Holland in the wars, and on that account had often passed through the sea towns in Flanders, observed a weakness in one part of the walls of Ostend, by which the town might easily be surpris'd. At his return to Paris, he acquainted Cardinal Mazarine with this, and gave him

him so great encouragement, that the Cardinal resolved to try some stratagem, in order to gain that important place, without the cost and hazards of a formal siege.

To this end, he commands Gentilot to seek out some persons fit to be engaged in the plot: Men of resolution, conduct, and secrecy. This Captain, therefore, knowing two or three fugitives in Paris, who were forced to fly out of Flanders to save their lives, having committed murders and other crimes against the Spanish government, breaks the business to them, promising them mountains of gold, if they would assist in carrying it on.

They seemed to embrace his proposals with abundance of readiness, and were introduced into the Cardinal's cabinet, where that Minister, being satisfied in their characters, and the offers they made to serve him in this affair, seconded the promises which Gentilot had made them, with many additional encouragements. In a word, they consulted together frequently; were late every night in the Cardinal's lodgings: And at last, having adjusted all the necessary measures that were to be taken, the fugitives were dispatched away into England with letters from Mazarine to Oliver, the English Protector: Wherein he acquainted him with the design, requiring the assistance of some English ships to transport men into the haven of Ostend.

These agents went accordingly, but with a resolution to put a trick both on the Cardinal and the Protector; and, by doing their country so considerable a service, as the saving this town, to merit a repeal of the sentence pronounced against them, that so they might return home in peace, and enjoy their estates and native liberty.

Oliver received them very kindly, and embraced the motion with some warmth. But, upon second thoughts, he tried to out-bribe Mazarine, and hire these persons for himself. Ostend was too sweet a bait in his eye to let it fall tamely into the hands of the French, for want of a few large promises, and offers

of gold. Wherefore he plied these agents briskly with all the effectual oratory he could, to win them over to his own separate interest; engaging to bestow great preferments on them in England, with two hundred thousand sequins, as soon as the business was accomplished.

The three Flemings desired no better sport than thus to cajole the two ablest Statesmen in Europe. They possessed Oliver with an intire belief of their zeal and fidelity in his service: And it was agreed on between them to hold Mazarine in play, and that Oliver should send him an answer, refusing to meddle in an intrigue which seemed to carry so little probability of success.

From England these agents passed into Zealand, it having been concluded before they parted from Cardinal Mazarine; that so they might there gain more confederates, and lay all the necessary trains to bring this intrigue to the desired issue. But, instead of doing either the Protector or Cardinal Mazarine this service, they went immediately and revealed the whole secret to the Governor of Flanders.

He, having duly examined all circumstances, and being satisfied in the truth of their relations, and in their loyalty to the King of Spain, commanded them to proceed in deluding both the French and the English, as long as they could, with fair hopes of accomplishing their aims: Whilst he took care to secure Ostend and other parts of Flanders from all attempts of this nature.

In fine, the Protector falling off again, being frightened by Cardinal Mazarine's threats, who had discovered his under-hand dealings, these agents applied themselves close to the French, who were now made so much more eager by Oliver's design to interlope them. They spun out the intrigue several moons, brought the French King to sign articles, and to pass his word for the payment of near a million of gold; cajoled his General in Flanders, and at one time made him believe it was his interest to lie still for six weeks together, when all the world expected he

he would pursue his conquests in that province. At another time he caused him to march with so much precipitation, when the ways were impassable, that he was forced to leave most of his cannon, and a thousand waggons plunged in the deep roads, with the loss of three thousand men, who were either drowned or starved : And all this for the sake of gaining Ostend. When, after all, they were not only cheated of their hopes in that point, but most shamefully exposed to the derision and contempt of all Europe. For Cardinal Mazarine reposed an entire confidence in the fidelity of his Flemish agents : So that whatsoever he proposed, as an expedient to compass the design, was a law. Hence it was that the French General in Flanders received express orders to embark part of his army on certain vessels that lay before Dunkirk, and, on a prefixed day, to sail into the haven of Ostend, there to land his men, and take possession of the town, in the name of his Master ; being made to believe, that the gates would be opened to him, and that the Spanish garrison should march out in his sight.

All this was carried on with so much artifice and subtle management, that, when he entered the haven with the vessels, he thought himself secure of the place : Yet, he no sooner landed his men to the number of fifteen hundred, but they thundered upon them such volleys of great and small shot from the walls, that two hundred of them fell immediately, as many threw down their arms, and, the citizens making a vigorous sally, the rest were either killed or taken prisoners, he himself not escaping that misfortune.

By this thou mayest discern how easy it is for an agent of a Prince to embarrass his Master's affairs : And that a public minister can never commit a greater or more dangerous error, than in being too credulous.

Serene Bassa, let not Mahmut's name sound harsh at the Porte, nor his honour be traduced by sycophants ;

phants ; since his loyalty is proof against all temptations, and this the Ministers of the Divan know by twenty years experience.

Paris, 5th of the 10th Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER XIII.

To Pesteli Hali, his Brother, Master of the
Grand Signior's Customs at Constantino-
ple.

I Have received a dispatch from our cousin Isouf. He has been in a cold region, within the Arctick circle; but now is at Stockholm in Sweden. The parts he has visited are the farthestmost tracts of our continent to the North. They may be called the territories of night and darkness; for they have but one day in a whole year. The sun appears but once above their horizon, during his annual progress through the zodiac: Yet he makes them amends by the long continued lights he affords them at that season: For that one day is, without the miracle of Joshua, prolonged the space of four, five, or six moons, according to the proportionate distance of each country from the pole.

Isouf relates strange things of those dark countries, and such as seem almost to surpass credit, were they not confirmed by many grave and learned writers. He says, that in some parts of Norway no tree is to be seen, by reason of the violent force of the winds, which blew down all before them, carrying away even the roofs of houses, and scattering them at a great distance. So that the inhabitants are forced to dwell in dens and caves, and burn the bones of fishes for want of better fuel; since it is impossible for any plant to grow in those parts. Nei-

ther can men travel safely on horses, or a foot, at certain tempestuous seasons : For the wind will either throw down horse and man to the ground, or catch them up into the air.

But, when he describes the horrible coldness of these regions, the very idea of it is enough to make one quake. He says cold is an active quality, and reigns under the North pole, as in its proper kingdom or center, from whence it darts its freezing rays through the earth. Yet others are of opinion, that cold is only a privation of heat, a bare passive disposition of the elements ; and therefore more sensibly felt in those climates that are farthest from the warm influence of the sun, whose beams give life and vigour to all things. Be it how it will, its effects are very remarkable in these northern regions.

All rivers, lakes, and seas, there, are frozen up during the winter. Men, horses, waggons, coaches, and even whole armies, pass as commonly over the ice, as before ships sailed there, or as we travel over the firm land. And, last winter, the Baltick sea was the road of ice, over which the King of Sweden marched with his army of horse and foot into Zealand, to prosecute the war in those parts. They also raise strong forts of snow, able to sustain the battery of bullets, and engines of war, with all the violence of the fiercest assaults. They build caravansera's on the frozen seas and lakes, for the conveniency of travellers ; and set up branches of firs or juniper, as marks to distinguish the holes and fissures of the ice from that which is solid and secure ; for there are high-ways on those congealed waters, and officers appointed to survey them, and take all necessary orders for the security of travellers : And sometimes they fight pitched battles on the frozen element.

Our kinsman also has made curious remarks on the triumphal obelisks and funeral monuments of ancient heroes among the Goths and Swedes : For these nations boast of giants and famous warriors. These monuments, though of stone, and exquisi-

sitely shaped; yet were never cut, by the hand of man, but so many splinters of rocks and mountains torn from the main body by the violence of earthquakes, thunders, or the like motions of nature; and, falling down in the forms of pyramids, and other artificial figures, were of old set up by the graves of giants, and other renowned persons, having also inscriptions on them signifying the particular hero who there lies buried : Such as these,

I Uffro, fighting in defence of my country, with my own hand killed thirty-two giants; and, at last being killed by the giant Rolvo, my body lies here.

And,

I Ingolvas, that subdued all oppressors, and defended the poor and weak ; now grown old, poor, and weak myself, yet having my sword girt to my thigh, am forced to yield to death, (who conquers all things) and to go down to this sepulchre, which I prepared for my last retreat.

It seems there are infinite numbers of these tombs all over the desarts, mountains, and vallies of the North ; which is an argument, that, however contemptible these people may seem to the True Believers, yet they have not been wanting in valiant men and heroes. Doubtless, God has dispensed his virtues and graces to men of all nations : He is not partial in his gifts. We ought to praise him in the beginning and end of all our actions. And, if we contemplate his honour in the middle of our affairs, we shall not do amiss ; since, as he is the first and last of the universe, so he is the center of every thing.

I had not these relations only from Isouf, but out of the historians themselves, who write of these countries : Yet our kinsman informs me of some things which are omitted by those authors. Every traveller is singular in his observations. For all men have not the same genius; and thy journal of the East abounds with remarks which are not common with other writers.

Brother, if I may advise thee, it shall be to do nothing by imitation; but pursue the dictates of thy own sense, and the peculiar bent of thy soul. For whatever is forced and affected is nauseous.

Paris, 16th of the 12th Moon,
of the Year 1658.

LETTER XIV.

To Zeidi Alamanzi, a Merchant in Venice.

THE Kaimacham has informed me, that thou art appointed to succeed Adonai the Jew in Italy. He hath also acquainted me with other matters relating to thy charge. I am glad they have found out a Mussulman capable of that important trust, and that we shall not always stand in need of Jews to serve the Grand Signior, Emperor of the Faithful. Though some of that nation are very honest and loyal, it is better to be without them.

Thou and I are strangers to each other: But it is necessary for us to be speedily acquainted, and hold a mutual intimacy by letters, so that we may serve our great Master without interfering or clashing in our intelligence. I have been here these twenty years and made no false steps in my Sovereign's business, whatever I have done in my own: Yet have encountered a thousand difficulties and perils; suffered imprisonment many moons in Paris for my fide-

lity ; whilst my enemies at Constantinople persecuted me as a traitor and an Infidel.

It is impossible to avoid these crosses, in the course of human life : They are natural as the wind or the rain : All that we can do is, by a prudent and dexterous management of contingencies, to wind ourselves out of the trouble as well as we can ; and, above all, rather to be our own executioners, than betray the least secret committed to us.

I question not but thou hast had the same instructions given thee by the Ministers of the happy Porte. What I say is only to confirm thee in thy fidelity and care. Write to me with the same frankness, and let nothing make thee reserved to thy fellow-slave. We are both followers of the Prophet : We worship one God after the same manner, and equally reverence the Alcoran. We serve one Master ; and, though in different stations, yet let our affections and interests be united as friends. Let no little narrow passions or emulations corrupt our integrity, nor teach us to unman ourselves.

I know not thy original, whether thou art of Mahometan or Christian parents. It would be very obliging in thee to send me a short history of thy life, and how thou learnedst the Italian tongue. For, without that, I judge they would not have sent thee into that country.

As for me, I am an Arabian by birth, brought up in the Seraglio, from thence sent to sea, there taken captive by the Christians, sold in Sicily, where I underwent a tedious servitude, yet at length gained my freedom : And, having passed through various fortunes, at last was sent hither, to observe the secret counsels of the Christians, especially of this Court.

I now grow old, having seen near fifty years : Yet, though the strength of my body fails, I feel not the least decay in my zeal for the Mussulman faith, or my Master's service. I am still Mahmut
the

the loyal slave of the Porte ; and thy friend, so long as thou art so thyself.

Paris, 30th of the 1st Moon,
of the Year 1659.

LETTER XV.

To the Kaimacham.

IT rejoices me to hear, that Adonai's place is supplied by a Mussulman, in whom the sublime Porte may put more confidence, than in any of the Jewish race. It will be encouragement to the true Faithful, and a precedent of good import. For no nation loves to see their Prince bestow offices of trust on strangers, when his own people are as capable of employment as they. It is generally taken as an affront, and contempt of their abilities or their virtue, and has often produced ill consequences.

I deny not but there are many honest and wise men among the Hebrews, persons of merit and honour, from whence the Sultan receives no small services; but this ought not to diminish the reputation of those who are of the same faith with their Sovereign. Doubtless, Arabia and Turkey are not barren of good Soldiers, prudent Statesmen, and dexterous Ministers.

I know not the character of Zeidi Alamanzi, whether he be a natural born Turk, a tributary son of a Christian, or a voluntary Renegado. However, the choice that is made of him convinces me, that the unerring Divan esteem him a man fit for the business committed to his charge.

He ought to be perfectly skilled in Italian, or at least in some other language of the Nazarenes; that so he may pass the better unsuspected among the people where he resides, who are more jealous of strangers than any other nation in Europe. It is a

crime thought worthy of imprisonment for a Venetian to converse with a foreigner too frequently, and in private. For they are afraid, lest by that means a dangerous correspondence should be established between some ill-affected subjects of that Commonwealth and its enemies : Whereby their secrets may be betrayed and measures taken to ruin them.

For this reason also they have forbidden false hair, or perukes to be worn by any in their dominions, lest this might serve as a disguise for villains and traitors. Yet nothing is more common in France and other countries of Europe, than for men to wear on their heads ornaments of women's hair instead of their own.

As to religion, I believe they will not much trouble him, being not zealots themselves. And, provided he does but profess himself a Christian and Catholick, they will make no farther inquisition.

The Italians in general are much like the ancient Romans in their humour : Men of grave aspect and carriage, and much more composed in both than the French, who appear ridiculous through the levity of their discourse and actions. The former abound in sage precepts of morality, and politick aphorisms which serve as a rule whereby to square the course of their lives : The latter only affect some flashy improvements of wit and conversation, studying rather how to please women than men ; coveting to be perfect in external accomplishments, and the graces of the body, whilst they slight the more valuable endowments of the mind. In a word, they are mere apes and mimicks. On the contrary, the Italians are men of an awful and majestick behaviour, solid judgment, and deep reach. If you see them smile, you shall seldom or never see them laugh : Whereas the motion of a feather will set the French a braying like asses. These will contract a warm friendship with any man at first interview, heighten it with a thousand compliments, make him their confessor, and unbosom all their secrets. Yet a second encounter shall extinguish their passion, and a third

third shall revive it again : Whereas those are cautious and slow in the choice of their friends ; and, when once that knot is dissolved, it is never to be fastened there again : They are irreconcilable in their hatred and revenge.

But there are men to be excepted in all nations, who fall not under these general characters. France affords many wise and learned persons ; and Italy not a few fools and idiots. Virtues and vices are strangely mixed in all people. War, commerce, and travel, with other human occurrences, alter men's natural dispositions, and give the lye to the exactest observations that can be made. Besides, time changes all things ; and the qualities, which this age remarks in the Italians, may in the next be transferred to the French. For there is no constancy in any thing under the moon.

Zeidi will find great examples of frugality among the Venetians, in the necessary expences of their persons and families ; yet abundance of magnificence in whatever relates to the publick, which the subjects of that Commonwealth serve with open purses and free hearts.

Indeed, they are not so remarkable for their temperance, as some other parts of Italy. Libertinism and voluptuousness reign uncontrouled in Venice. Women and wine are there almost as common as the elements. Yet it is observed, that strangers generally debauch more with both than the natives. God preserve Zeidi from their temptations.

If it be his fortune or duty to visit Padua, he ought not to make too long an abode in that nest of philosophers and physicians, lest they first anatomise his soul, discover the secrets of his commission, and then turn his body to a skeleton ; as they once served a Moor, whom they dissected alive, to make experiments, perhaps, whether a Mahometan's blood circulated the same way as a Christian's.

Those Italian physicians are very cruel, and think it no sin to try poisons, and other fatal tricks on the poor, that so they may be the better able to keep the

rich on the rack at their pleasure, and make their market of them.

I know not Zeidi's appointed station, or what cities he is to see. But, wherever he is to go, it will be necessary for him to use abundance of caution; for the Italians are the closest, sliest, and most judicious people in the world.

But I forgot that he is chosen by the Divan for this employment, to whom the characters of all nations are known, and who penetrates into the most interior recesses of men's spirits.

Therefore I lay my hand upon my mouth in profound submission, and acquiesce to my Superiors: Still praying, that the Grand Signior may have faithful and wise Ministers at home, and no novices for his agents abroad.

Paris, 3d of the 2d Moon,
of the Year 1659.

LETTER XVI.

To William Vospel, a Recluse of Austria.

THERE is a street in Paris, which they call the Street of Hell. The reason of this name is said to be, because, at one end of it, there formerly stood an old house possessed by devils; who were so troublesome, that, as the records of Paris affirm, an edict of Parliament was passed to remove all the inhabitants out of their houses in that street, and shut up the entrance with a wall. Since which, these dæmons were expelled by the Carthusians, who built a monastery in this place. If this story be true, it redounds much to the reputation of that order, and of all your monasticks in general, who by your exorcisms are able to subdue the infernal spirits. But I have heard so many silly tales of houses
being

being haunted by ghosts and hobgoblins, that I know not how to give credit to this.

Besides, when I consider the nature of incorporeal beings, it seems ridiculous to think that they can take delight to play the anticks, to frighten poor mortals; or confine themselves to an old ruined castle (for such was this house) for the sake of a little sport; when, according to the ancient philosophers, every incorporeal being is far more excellent than the most perfect body, and can be every-where: Neither are they at any time locally present in bodies, but only by propension or habit are inclined to them: And this they mean of living bodies. What charms then can there be in an old rotten fabrick of stone and wood, to allure and detain immaterial substances?

Certainly the nature of these separate beings is very remote from all compounded beings. I have been often at a loss, in contemplating the soul of man. Sometimes it seems no otherwise distinguished from the soul of brutes than by being united to a body of different organs; which causes us to shew more evident tokens of reason than they, in the faculty of discourse, and in our actions. Yet, when I consider more attentively the operations of our mind and intellect, I cannot but conclude there is a vast distinction between our souls and those of the beasts; I have with pleasure observed the excellency of human intellect in madmen and dreamers, who, being come to themselves, (as we usually say) relate many things of which they were before ignorant, and comprehend things surpassing their former imaginations.

It appears therefore more rational to me, that the soul is every-where and no-where, as the Ancients say; than that it is shut up and imprisoned in the body, as a wild beast in his den, or liquor in a glass. However, by an ineffable production of itself, it is present in every part of the body, as the light of the sun is diffused through the air; and can as soon withdraw itself, as that light, when interrupted by a cloud,

cloud. In a word, I conceive the soul to be a very free agent, and that it is here and there and everywhere. It united itself to a body by its own choice, and can retire again from it at pleasure.

One closely pursued act of contemplation will at any time carry thee or me to the invisibles, whenever we go resolutely about it.

Paris, 1st of the 4th Moon,
of the Year 1659.

LETTER XVII.

To the venerable Ibrahim Cadilesquier of
Romelia.

THERE has not a year escaped since my arrival at Paris, wherein I did not send to the Ministers of the ever happy and excellent Porte constant intelligences of battles, sieges, storming of towns, and such other occurrences of war, as happened between the kingdoms of France and Spain. But now I believe my future dispatches must contain other matters. For, in all appearance, this war, which had lasted four and twenty years, is in a fair way to be ended. The King of Spain grows weary of his continual losses in Italy, Flanders, and Catalonia : France seems glutted with perpetual victories and conquests. In a word, these two potent Monarchs, laying aside their quarrels, are making diligent preparations this year for a campaign of friendship and love.

They are both in arms, yet commit no acts of hostility. Whilst Cardinal Mazarine, on the part of this Crown, and Don Louis d'Haro de Gusman, first Minister of Spain, are gone to meet each other on the frontiers of both kingdoms, as Plenipotentiaries for their respective Masters, to concert the measures

measures of a lasting peace, and treat of a marriage between the King of France and the Infanta of Spain.

All Europe is amazed at this surprising change. And the French and Spaniards, who border on each other, can hardly believe their own senses, whilst they find a mutual commerce restored between their frontier towns and villages; which had been interrupted ever since the year 1635, about sixteen moons before I came to this city.

But, though they are thus disposed to peace here in the West, the Northern Monarchs are pushing the oar forward in Sweden, Denmark, and Poland, with all imaginable vigour and animosity. The coming over of the Elector of Brandenburg to the Danish interest has made a great alteration in their affairs. For, whereas fortune seemed before in all things to favour the Swedes, now they lose ground, and find their attempts unsuccessful. Four thousand of their men fell before the walls of Copenhagen, in three nights and two days; which caused King Gustavus to raise the siege. Whilst the Duke of Brandenburg retook Frederickstadt, and thereby restored to the King of Denmark the provinces of Holstein, Jutland, and Ditmarsen.

The Hollanders also have made a combat with the Swedes at sea, and sunk fourteen of their best ships, besides what they burnt and took.

These events have stirred up several Princes to mediate a peace. And it is not improbable, but in a little time we may see all the Christians good friends; and then it will be time for the Mussulmans to be on their guard.

As for Mahmut, he will not fail to pry into the counsels of these Infidels, and send timely notices to the Porte; leaving the rest to the wisdom of his Superiors, and the pleasure of Destiny.

Paris, 29th of the 6th Moon,
of the Year 1659.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

To Musu Abu'i Yahyan Alfaqui, Professor
of Theology at Fez.

THE character which the great and illustrious Abdel Melec Muli Omar, President of Presidents, grace and ornament of ancient learning, oracle of Africa, and restorer of obsolete truth, has given me of the profound wisdom and science, fills me with reverence and sacred love. I am ravished with wonder and joy to hear, that in this age, wherein the Mussulman theology has suffered so many innovations, there yet survives a man who dares, and is able to assert against all opposers, not only the primitive and original truth brought down from heaven by the hand of Gabriel, but also the real and indubitable sayings, sermons, counsels, and actions of the Prophet, whilst he was on earth conversing with mortals, before his transmigration to the gardens of eternal repose and solitude. Thou art the Enoch, the Hermes Trismegistus of the age.

I have seen many copies of the Zune, or the Book of Doctrines; each pretending to comprise the whole system of that divine philosophy and wisdom which dropt from the lips of our incomparable and most holy Lawgiver, and were attested by his wife, the holy Agesha, mother of the Faithful, and by his ten disciples. Yet all these various transcripts differ both in their sense and manner of expression.

I have perused the books intitled Dalif, or Imperfect, which contain the memoirs of his other wives; and the manuscripts called Maucif or Fragments: Being only a collection of some select sentences, aphorisms, and parables of the Sent of God. But these have no authority to back them, except the credit of some learned Scribes, who were not familiar with the Divine Favourite, only living in his time, and taking things on report.

In

In fine, I have met with several parchments of Zaquni, or pretended traditions of Abu Becre, Omar, and Othman ; but these I esteem as spurious, corrupted, and full of errors.

What shall I say ? The zeal of Omar Eb'n Abd'il-Aziz, the ninth Caliph of the tribe of Merwan, is not unknown to me : I am no stranger to his singular piety, not to be matched among crowned Heads : For of him it is recorded, that, as he descended from the throne at the time of his inauguration, he gave the robe from his back, as an alms to a poor man : And that, during his whole reign, he spent but two piasters a day on himself. And so great was his resignation to Destiny, (an admirable virtue in a Sovereign Emperor) that, when he was on his bed in his last sickness, and was counselled to take physic, he answered, " No ; if I were sure
" to heal myself only by reaching my finger to my
" ear, I would not : For the place to which I am
" going is full of health and bliss."

This Caliph was a miracle of humility, and his charity always kept him poor : Mostema Eb'n Abd'il Melec relates, that, going to visit Omar on his death-bed, he found him lying on a couch of palm-leaves, with three or four skins instead of a pillow, his garments on, and a foul shirt underneath. Seeing this, Mostema was grieved, and, turning to his sister Phatema the Empress, he said, " How comes
" it to pass that the great Lord, Commander of the
" Faithful, appears in so squalid a condition ?"
She replied, " As thou livest, he has given away
" all that he had, even to the very bed that was under him, to the poor, and only reserved what thou
" seest, to cover his nakedness." Then Mostema could not refrain, but burst forth into tears, saying, " God shew thee mercy upon mercy, thou Royal
" Saint : For thou hast pierced our hearts with the
" fear of his Divine Majesty." This Caliph was numbered among the Saints.

He it was, that, perceiving the contradictions and disputes of the Mussulmans, the darkness and confusion

fusion of the various copies of the Zune, or Book of Doctrine, assembled a general Divan of Mollabs and learned men at Damascus, from all parts of the empire: commanding that all the manuscripts of the Zune, which were extant, should be brought into this assembly, on pain of death to him that should detain one. This being done, he commanded six of them to be chosen out of the whole number by vote; men eminent for learning and piety; and that these six should severally collect, out of all the multitude of copies, each man a book, containing what he thought to be the most genuine discourses of the Prophet, concerning this world, and that which is to come. When this was executed according to his will, he commanded all the old books to be burnt in a field near Damascus.

Yet, after all the religious care of this holy Caliph to restore the writings to their primitive integrity, the Mussulmans soon fell into new contention, about the sense and interpretation of those corrupt copies of the Zune. From whence sprung the four cardinal sects, on which all the innumerable lesser and latter divisions among True Believers are founded.

I cannot therefore but inwardly rejoice, and from my heart highly applaud the method taken by those of our renowned college to discern the true doctrines and sayings of the holy Prophet from those which are suppositions, by comparing all the books that are extant together, and reducing matters of divine revelation to the analogy of the Alcoran: Those of philosophy and moral regards to the standard of experience and reason; for it is impious to believe, that the divine Apostle would impose any thing on our faith repugnant to the sense of men, or the express will of Heaven. By the soul of Pythagoras, Mahomet said nothing but what was rational and evident to any unprejudiced mind. But the greatest part of these sectaries are besotted: They form to themselves false notions of God and his Prophets,

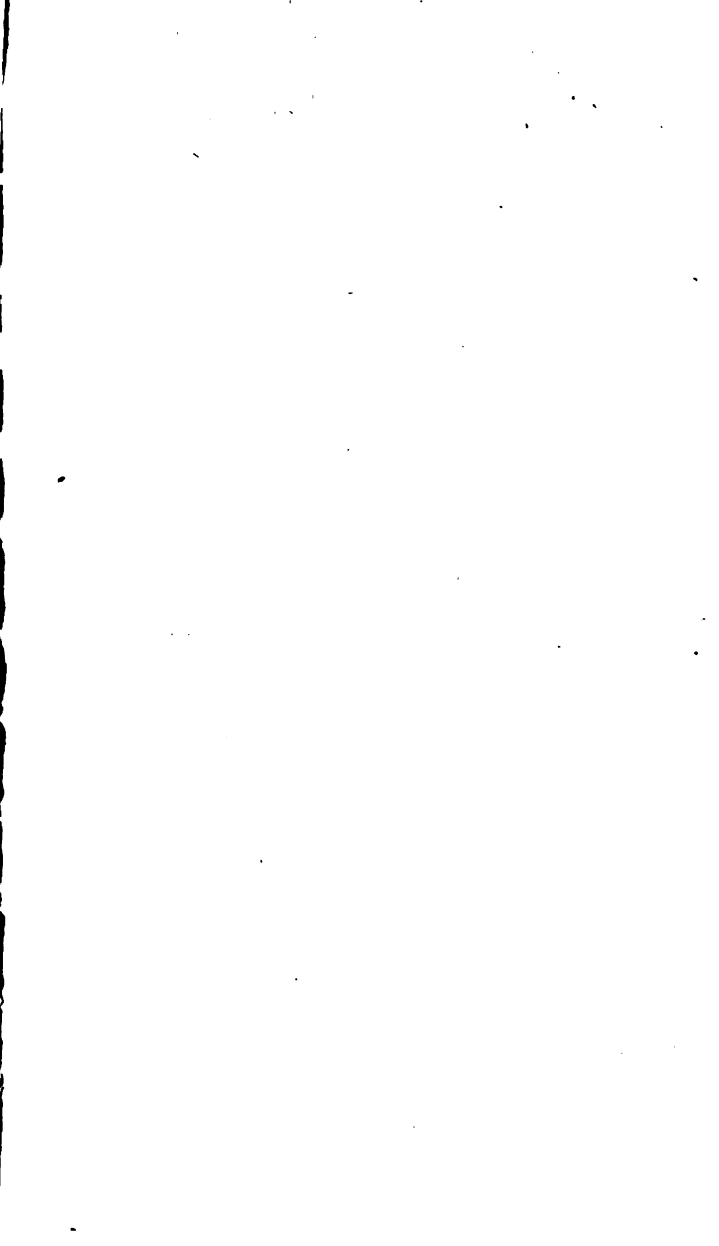
Prophets, and think to merit Paradise by their stupidity.

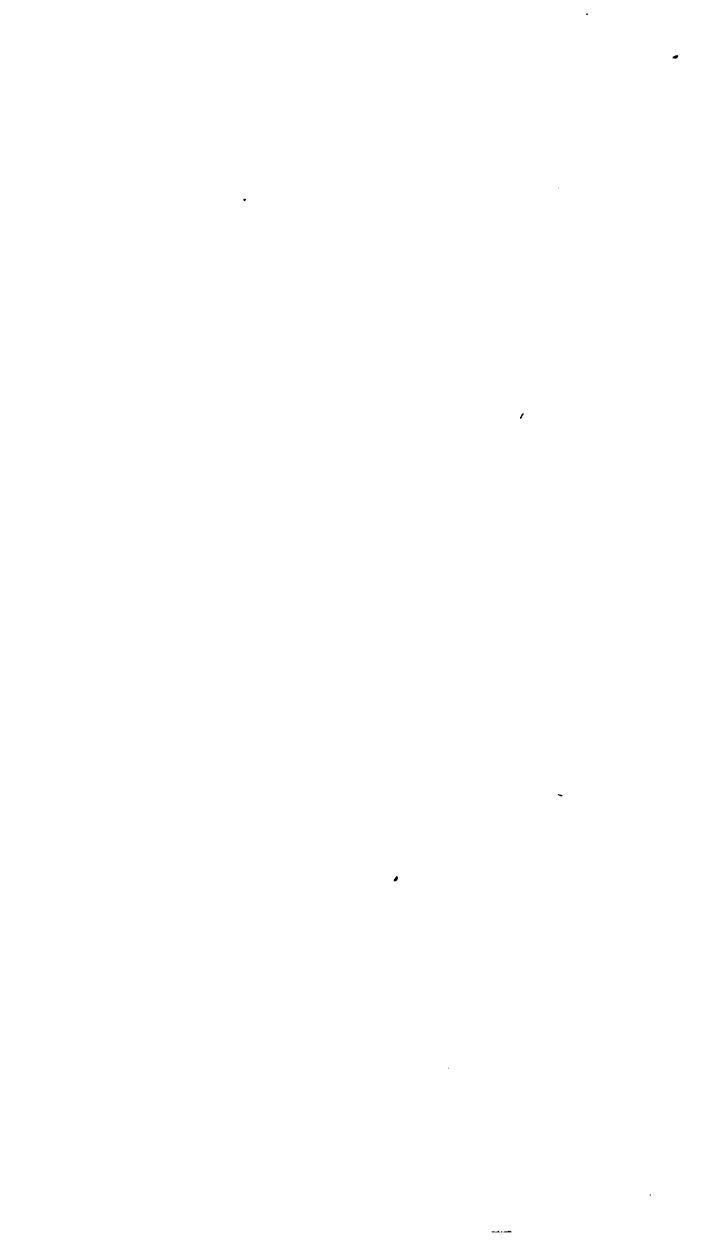
Reverend Alfaqui, I have much more to say to thee, and many questions to ask ; but time and the Grand Signior's service force me to conclude abruptly, wishing thee perfection of bliss.

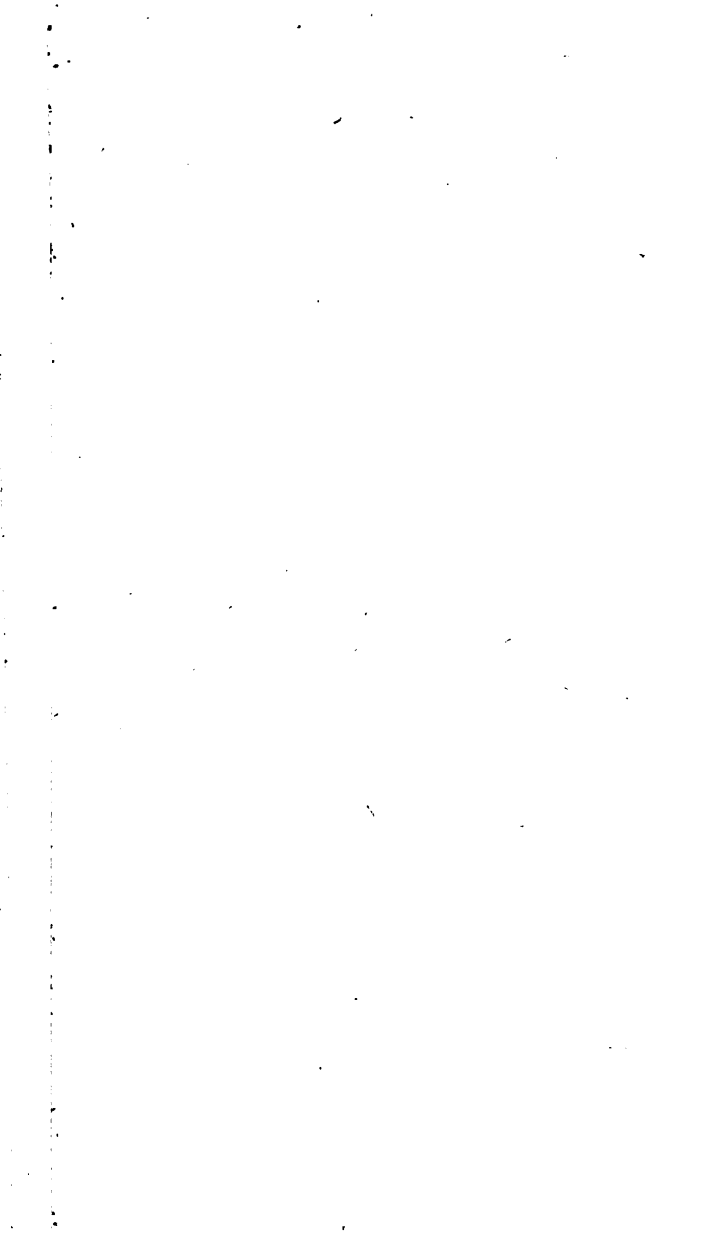
Paris, 29th of the 6th Moon, of
the year 1659, according to
the Christian style.

The End of the Fifth Volume.

4-6 32







FORM 410

